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The Week

A WEEK ago we commented on the situation in the Far East in an article entitled Drifting Toward Disaster in China. Since then, the powers have made public the context of their identic note to the Peking government which definitely indicates their refusal to take the only action which holds out any hope of halting that drift. They have informed Peking that no relief from extra-territoriality and other special privileges may be expected until China is able to guarantee safety for foreign lives and property. But everyone who knows anything at all knows that this is sheer nonsense. No government of China can give any such guarantees in the present state of popular opinion, a state for which the existing attitude, actions and special privileges of the foreigners are largely to blame. We agree with Thomas F. Millard, a leading authority on China, who cables to the New York Times that the note "contains almost nothing toward meeting Chinese minimum aspirations," adding that it "reads as if written five or ten years ago." The powers have in fact not advanced an inch beyond their attitude at Washington in 1921. The Chinese have no more reason to hope now for treatment which they will regard as fair than they had then. Meanwhile their own demands have gone much further. We have no hesitancy in saying that the action of the powers makes the outlook as grave as possible.

THE IDENTIC note represents a victory for the British government over that of the United States. The language may have been softened a little to placate America, but the policy is precisely that which Great Britain has demanded from the beginning. Legally, of course, a good case may be made for it. Every power has the right in theory to demand safeguards for the lives and property of its nationals from every other power. But in such a situation as exists today it is no time to stand on logic and legality. That policy has produced most of all the wars that have ever been fought. What is needed and needed at once, is a definite gesture of friendliness by the powers, the meaning of which shall be inescapable to the leaders of the present revolt. Instead of this, a note has been sent which gives not the slightest support to such Chinese leaders as are in favor of a moderate and conciliatory attitude. On the contrary, it offers invaluable ammunition to those who declare that it is hopeless to expect either fair or generous treatment from the invaders. That America should have thrown her influence behind the British policy is little short of tragic. The more reasonable Chinese have counted on us, and on us alone, to stand out for an attitude sufficiently conciliatory to make possible, somehow, a bridging of the gap. Small wonder if they should now conclude that the only real friend China has is Soviet Russia!

ANOTHER year's income tax figures have been made public; and the action has been followed, as before, by frenzied howls that such publicity is an outrageous invasion of private rights, serves no useful purpose and should be ended at once. A new drive against the law is promised for the next session of Congress, with President Coolidge's support and with alleged great hope of success. This hope we believe to be unfounded. Congress, in our judgment, is unlikely to repeal the law. It knows the

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source and character of the demand too well to take it seriously.

THE newspapers have collected the opinions of numerous individuals, including some collectors of internal revenue, to the effect that publicity for tax returns has had no beneficial effect. We do not question the sincerity of the amiable gentlemen who give us this assurance, but such obiter dicta are of course plain poppycock. No one can tell whether the law has been beneficial or not unless he has been able during the past year to read the minds of some millions of his fellow citizens and say that the expectation of publicity has not altered in any way the conscientiousness with which they have recorded the facts of their income and expense. It is notorious that the payment of this tax has in the past been marked by much sharp practice if not deliberate dishonesty. In our opinion, the publicity law has probably ameliorated this condition. But we concede cheerfully that this is an opinion merely. We have no reliable evidence on the matter. Neither has anyone else.

DOES the average citizen share in the burning demand for repeal of the law? We doubt it. The income of Mr. John A. Commonpeople is pretty well known anyhow. If he is an employe of federal, state, county or municipal government, a teacher in school or college, or a member of a trade union, his approximate income is already known to his associates and accessible to everyone else who cares to learn it. If he is a farmer, his neighbors can work out the year's return with an envelope back and a pencil stub in a few minutes. Most white collar [illegible] have a scale of remuneration which is standard quite closely. The people regarding whose [illegible]es there is real doubt are capitalists, heads of businesses, high-powered salesmen, promoters, etc. These are the precise groups, the social value of whose service has in recent decades begun to be called seriously in question; and the precise groups from which issues most violently the opinion that tax publicity is an un-American outrage. It is impossible not to wonder whether the protests do not proceed from the feeling, doubtless unconscious, that the size of income in these groups is in fact out of proportion to the service rendered and that the less Demos knows about it, the better.

TO THE long record of tragic accidents in our air service were added two more last week. The Navy seaplane PN 9 No. 1, lost on a flight from San Francisco to Hawaii, has not been found as we go to press, and there is only one chance in a million that the five men on board her are still alive. Seventy-two hours later, the giant Navy dirigible Shenandoah broke up while fighting a storm near Caldwell, Ohio, killing fourteen of her crew. It is clear that even with the best of precautions, flying is dangerous business; but when we add to last week's toll the great losses in previous disasters—forty-four dead in the ZR-2, thirty-two in the Roma, fifty in the Dixmude and many more in the long roster of airplane accidents, we begin to ask whether it is not being made more dangerous than need be, by the inaction or wrong action of the military and naval authorities.

COL. WILLIAM MITCHELL, the enfant terrible of the whole military establishment, answers that question with an emphatic Yes, so far as America is concerned. He has issued a 6,000 word statement declaring that the recent accidents are the "direct result of the incompetency, criminal negligence and almost treasonable administration by the War and Navy Departments." Realizing that he was almost sure to be court-martialled for this statement, the doughty Colonel goes on in the familiar vein which has already caused him to be reduced from his rank of Brigadier-General and exiled from Washington to Texas. His attack is intended, as was his campaign last winter, to point out the necessity of creating for America a separate Air Service coöperating with the Army and Navy but subordinate to neither. We summarize his chief points:

> The fliers in the PN 9 No. 1 were exposed to needless risk (a) because ships of her design are too heavy and slow for such long flights, (b) because the control vessels should have been much less than 200 miles apart and should have steamed forward on the course at full speed during flight, (c) because fuel should have been replenished during flight as is done by the Army, (d) because five men were carried instead of two or three. The Shenandoah was "50 percent overweight," and her gas escape valves had been reduced in number below the safety line. German experience proves a dirigible properly built and equipped can outride almost any storm. The loss of this ship shows "incompetence and criminal neglect in the Navy Department."

Colonel Mitchell is a propagandist, and his observations are to be taken with the three grains of salt which should always accompany the animadversions of these gentry. He has long maintained that the Army and Navy Departments are incompetent to conduct an air force and eagerly seizes the opportunity to point out a case seemingly justifying his thesis. As we go to press, several investigations of the accident to the Shenandoah are under way. It is to be hoped that they will go deep enough to discover whether Colonel Mitchell's general charge of incompetence and criminal neglect is in any degree justified.

FORMER Secretary Hughes uttered an admirable plea for a greater spirit of tolerance, in the course of his remarks the other day before the American Bar Association. "The essential characteristic of true liberty," said Mr. Hughes, "is that under its shelter many different types of life and character

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and opinion and belief can develop unmolested and unobstructed." He warned the country against "false varieties of Americanism which profess to maintain American institutions while dethroning American ideals." Democracy, he added, has its own capacity for tyranny. This was a wise and statesmanlike warning; and our pleasure in applauding it is only slightly tinged by regret that in his late official position as Secretary of State Mr. Hughes sometimes—in the Károlyi case, for example—failed to practice what he now preaches. It is always so much easier to enunciate a principle in general than to apply it in a specific instance. More than one newspaper editor has observed that the community applauds his efforts to denounce dishonesty in officials until he clinches the case by mentioning some specific dishonest act of some individual. Thereupon the effort to shut him up becomes violent and concerted.

AT THE moment when Mr. Hughes was speaking, one of the sovereign states was affording an illustration of that lack of the spirit of fair play which he deplored. In North Dakota, this year as every other, the main reliance in gathering the all-important wheat crop has been itinerant labor, a large proportion of which consists of members of the I. W. W. This year as always, the men have reached the wheat fields by riding brake beams. The civil authorities at Fargo, N. D., apparently forgetting that if the I. W. W. failed to appear, the farmers on whom the town depends for its livelihood would suffer a catastrophic financial loss, arrested a number of the men. In protest, their fellows started a boycott against Fargo merchants; whereupon the simple-hearted natives rounded up all the I. W. W.'s they could find and put several score of them in jail. Shortly thereafter they were taken from the jail to the number of 118, beaten up by an armed mob, ten of them being severely injured, and run over the line into Minnesota. According to information in the hands of the American Civil Liberties Union, this action was taken with the deliberate connivance of the county officials. Fargo, thereby, earns its place on the not particularly honorable list of American cities to whom Mr. Hughes's words apply most closely, whose inhabitants remain civilized only when the temptation to be something else is not excessive.

DR. R. A. MILLIKAN, the physicist, has declared before the American Chemical Society in session at Los Angeles that men of learning should be "more modest and thoughtful." These are excellent words to have used in Los Angeles, and no doubt are needed by the chemists; but what they mean is not exactly clear. Apparently their tenor is theological.

> We must learn to get away from our assertiveness and dogmatism, whether scientific or theological [Dr. Millikan is quoted as saying further]. I see over-assertiveness from scientists in connection with such things as the late evolution trial, and I see on the other side assertiveness on subjects about which I know nobody knows anything. . . . The pathetic thing is that we have scientists who are trying to prove evolution, which no scientist can ever prove. Now I do not want you to think that I am on the other side; I am not. I am only asking for more caution.

SCIENTIFIC caution is never out of place, even in theology. But whereas caution is one thing, equivocation is another. Not long ago we had occasion to recall to our readers an interesting Credo, written by Dr. Millikan and signed by a number of eminent scientists, containing a statement to the effect that science furnishes a sublime conception of God, and specifying, albeit in rather vague terms, something of the nature of the conception. It would be interesting to know whether Dr. Millikan regards this scientific conception as proved, or only as revealed. The point is, as we have said before, and as Dr. Millikan has here superbly indicated, that a number of eminent scientists are anxious to be understood, whenever a conflict between science and religion is bruited, as standing squarely on both sides. For the purposes of science evolution is certainly far more definitely proved than anything in Dr. Millikan's field of subatomic physics. For the purposes of religion nothing is proved—subatomic physics, evolution, or Dr. Millikan's sublime conception.

BRYAN is dead; long live the Ku Klux Klan! According to a dispatch of the Associated Press, the national officials of the Klan are now at work upon a legislative program for the complete elimination of the teaching of evolution from the public schools of the nation. What is apparently contemplated is a general campaign for both state and federal action from which, however, the universities, even the state universities, are to be exempted. The official explanation of this sporadic manifestation of tolerance, or self-restraint, is that when children have been thoroughly enough taught in the lower schools that the earth was created in six days they will not be harmed by learning later that it evolved from a solar nebula. The wording of this ingenious pedagogical theory is interesting. "Once the mind has been molded into a sound structure of the fundamental truths of life and its creation then it is all right for it to seek other knowledge in research." What "all right" and "other" mean in this text must be left to the interpretation of the prophets of the Klan. Of course another explanation of the distinction between public schools and universities is that in the public schools teachers are habituated to teaching what they are told to teach, whereas in the universities professors are equally accustomed, with a few painful exceptions, to teach what they think.

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NEW York City, as our readers know, is now on the eve of a primary election preliminary to her quadrennial municipal campaign. The only contest of any importance is that for the Democratic nomination, which in New York is tantamount to election. Mayor Hylan, backed by W. R. Hearst, is opposed by State Senator "Jimmy" Walker, behind whom are the Tammany organization and in particular Governor Smith, who is risking his political future on the effort to unseat Hylan. The campaign has been chiefly notable, up to the time of going to press, for the extraordinary candor with which Governor Smith and Mr. Hearst have made public their opinions of one another, and Mr. Hylan has made public his opinion, usually a pessimistic one, of everything and everybody—always excepting the aforesaid Mr. Hearst. On issues, there is little to choose between Hylan and Walker, or indeed any of the candidates. All of them with the possible exception of Mr. Norman Thomas, the Socialist candidate, are campaigning on a platform of which the only visible planks are "more subways" and "a 5-cent fare." In a previous issue we paid our respects to the shortsighted policy which, by building more subways, would increase the congestion in a city already overcrowded almost beyond human endurance and urgently in need of decentralization. Putting aside, however, the question of promises which are made for vote-catching purposes, if any earnest Democrat were to ask us which way he ought to vote in the coming primary, we should certainly advise him to plump for Walker. We have, as our readers are aware, less than no affection for Tammany; but two facts seem to us inescapable: first, that a Wigwam of which Governor Smith is the real head is certainly better and less vulnerable than ever before in its history; and second, that Hylan is a political grotesque from whom hardly any avenue of escape is to be shunned.

Philippine Freedom—or American Rubber?

WITHIN the next few months we predict that a great deal will be seen in the public prints on the question whether the Philippines should ever be set free. A propaganda drive is about to begin which will have as its purpose the alteration of public opinion—in so far as any now exists—on the ultimate political destiny of those islands. The reason for the new interest may be summed up in one word: Rubber.

The United States is today the world's greatest user of rubber. We consume nearly three-quarters of all of it; and Great Britain, through her tropical colonies in the Pacific and Indian oceans produces about the same proportion. No one needs to be told how utterly our modern mechanized, motorized life is dependent upon this material which a few years ago was hardly known. It has entered so completely into every phase of man's occupations that few calamities can be imagined more serious than that resulting from an abrupt failure of supply. The arts of war depend upon it quite as much as those of peace.

Because of its extension into the Orient, the rubber industry has been expanding with great rapidity in recent years. Production has not only grown as fast as consumption, but in some years faster. As a result there was a few years ago a real or apparent over-production, and the price of rubber on the world market went very low. Thereupon the producers in the British Oriental colonies, with the advice and assistance of the authorities, put into effect a plan for restricting the export of rubber. An artificial scarcity has thus been created, just as it has been created in numerous other agricultural products at various times in all parts of the world, and especially in the United States. The price of rubber has shot up in a short time several hundred percent; it is estimated that because of this the increased expense to American users is now about $300,000,000 a year. Financial editors utter indignant complaints that this increase enables Great Britain to meet her whole annual war debt obligation. They conveniently forget the difference between a private profit and a government obligation, the gloom into which they themselves would be plunged if Great Britain were unable to pay, and finally, the numerous instances in the past when similar restrictions on output, when put into effect by American agricultural producers, have been accepted as normal business procedure.

However, $300,000,000 is a tidy sum; it would pay the cost of our navy for a year or one-tenth of the whole running expense of the federal government. Inevitably, American users of rubber have looked about anxiously for new sources of supply, not under the British flag, and if possible, under our own. The rubber now grown in the British and Dutch possessions, Malaya, Ceylon, Sumatra, is not native to those regions. It has been introduced there. Why should it not be introduced into the territory of the United States, or regions standing in a special relation to us? Echo answers, why not? The rubber tree is a temperamental plant, which demands a hot, humid climate. It will not grow in the continental United States. But there is for example such a place as Liberia, on the west coast of Africa only five degrees north of the equator and owing its political existence to the United States. American capital, undeterred by previous British failures nearby, is now about to start huge rubber plantations there. There are also, and for an even more important example, the Philippines.

These islands, according to special investigators of the U. S. Department of Commerce, offer an almost ideal location for rubber plantations, though at the present time less than 3,000 acres are devoted to this purpose. Contrary to general belief, the Philippines are quite extensive in area: eleven of

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the islands have among them 115,000 square miles, and support a population of 10,000,000. The soil and climate, so the experts say, are as good as or better than those of Sumatra and Malaya. The present population would afford a labor supply capable of producing 70,000 tons a year, with a final value of about $150,000,000 at present prices—a sum which would double the Islands' total exports. If additional labor were needed, there are China's millions, as to whom the proper adjective is "swarming," only a few gun-shots away. Existing Philippine laws forbid the importation of coolie labor, but this proviso could doubtless be changed. Why not, then, "American rubber for Americans," produced in the American Philippines?

The chief present objection is politico-economic. A rubber plantation is a vastly expensive operation; you have to wait until the trees are five to seven years old before you can tap them; the cost, with the most careful European or American management, is about $300 an acre. The Philippine Legislature some time ago passed a law limiting land ownership to 2,500 acres. An additional 75-year lease on 2,500 acres more could probably be obtained (the law is obscure and has not been the subject of a court ruling). A plantation of the former size is too small to be an efficient operating unit, but even so it represents an initial investment of three quarters of a million dollars. Nobody wants to put that much money into any enterprise unless he has the assurance that his investment will be and will remain secure. And in regard to the Philippines there is no such assurance at present.

In the whole twenty-seven years that we have held the islands it has always been on the assumption that eventually the Filipinos would receive their independence. Not only is this true, but a definite and official pledge of freedom has been given them. Displaying an attitude which is quite incomprehensible to many Americans, the inhabitants of these islands want to be free. Most of them would like to retain America's protection to the extent necessary to prevent encroachment by any other of the predatory powers; the suggested relationship is one which would be described by the British as "dominion status within the Empire." But they want complete authority over their own internal affairs—banking, taxation, land and labor laws. Americans are in the habit of saying that the Filipino politician wants to get rid of us in order that he may have the chance to exploit his fellow countrymen; but whether this be true or not, the fact is indisputable that a continuance of our present rule is desired by hardly anyone—except Americans. As is the case with so many other wards of great nations, the Filipinos' gratitude for our unselfish, civilizing activities seems to express itself in a burning desire to get rid of us as quickly and completely as possible—short, to be sure, of being gobbled up by someone else.

American capitalists interested in rubber fear that an all-Filipino administration, if ever brought into existence, would create an atmosphere unfavorable to the sort of thing they want to do. They remember the troubles of American investors in Mexico; they point to the existing Philippine law limiting land ownership to 2,500 acres as a specimen of the sort of thing they may expect; they argue that the presence of a rich corporation is likely to be regarded as an opportunity for confiscatory taxation. Therefore the issue is being raised frankly: why should we ever give the islands up? Rubber is a vital necessity; the Philippines are the one possible source of large supply now under the American flag. Let us repudiate our promise of independence and keep the islands forever. To the argument of military necessity which has been the chief one heard in the past may be added another of even greater urgency. A guaranteed, unfailing source of large quantities of rubber is now a life and death matter for the United States. This is the only way to secure it.

There are of course several fallacies in this doctrine. It is foolish to suppose that merely because rubber is grown under the American flag it will be available at a low price if demand should continue to outrun supply. If on the contrary it doesn't, the British will be forced, because of Dutch and other competition, to come down in their price. The United States, if it were dependent on Philippine rubber, would occupy a position about as precarious in case of war as with the supply coming from the British Middle East. Finally, to hold the Philippines in perpetuity against the wishes of their inhabitants might prove so expensive that not even the prospect that American automobile users could then be held up by plantation owners of their own nationality rather than by Englishmen or Hollanders would long prove attractive.

We believe that Congress is, on the whole, likely to take the anti-imperialist view of the situation. Even the most cynical must admit that the fact that our national honor is unreservedly pledged in the promise of independence will bear some weight. So will the feeling that our adventures in politico-economic imperialism in the Caribbean have on the whole turned out badly. There is also the general belief which is spreading nowadays that old-fashioned imperialism is a played-out game, partly because the march of the industrial revolution has gone past it, partly because the world is rapidly coming to a time when as the only alternative to a series of disastrous wars all tropical raw material must be allocated by international agreement among the powers which need them. But in the meantime, the argument of the rubber men has a surface plausibility and fits the temporary mood of the country. We therefore warn our readers that they should prepare to endure a cataract of argument in the near future, to the effect that "American rubber for Americans" must be the cornerstone of national policy from now on.

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Whatever Was, Was Right

READERS of the New Republic will remember references to the case of Benjamin Glassberg, who was dismissed from the faculty of the Commercial High School by the Board of Education of New York City on May 29, 1919, for conduct unbecoming a teacher. The conduct thus described consisted in stating to a class in history that the government of the United States was suppressing true reports in regard to the Soviet government of Russia, which if made public would show that the Bolshevists "are not so bad as most people think." In November, 1919, Mr. Glassberg appealed to Mr. Frank P. Graves, Commissioner of Education of the State of New York, for reinstatement. Mr. Graves apparently tried to accomplish this result by action of the New York Board of Education. The Deputy Commissioner and Counsel, Mr. Frank B. Gilbert, recommended such action, and it was urged by Mr. Arthur B. Somers, who as President of the Board had presided at Mr. Glassberg's trial. Mr. Somers attributed the dismissal to "the passion and prejudices current at the time of the trial." In spite of his advocacy the Board of Education refused Mr. Glassberg's petition. The final decision thus remained with the State Commissioner of Education, and on August 11, 1925, the Deputy Commissioner who had recommended favorable action to the City Board of Education dismissed the appeal.

There is nothing so surprising in this action as to call for extended comment. We pass over certain features of Mr. Gilbert's decision, such as his allegation that Mr. Glassberg made no effort to obtain a determination of his appeal until 1923, and his further excuse for delay on the ground that Mr. Glassberg had obtained employment and might have been injured by an adverse decision. (Mr. Glassberg's employment was with the Rand School!) These are merely ways of the official mind, of which Mr. Gilbert in his private life is doubtless as much ashamed as anyone. We pass over the temptation offered by Mr. Gilbert's possibly unconscious irony in quoting the New York Board's verdict that Mr. Glassberg's conduct had been such as to cause his pupils to retain sentiments of disrespect for, and contempt of constituted authorities, including the educational. We should dismiss the matter entirely were it not for the grounds put forward by Mr. Gilbert for his decisions: "I am controlled," he says, "by the testimony presented upon the trial of the charges against the appellant, and the findings and determination of the Board of Education upon such testimony. . . . I can reach no other conclusion than that there was reasonable basis for the action of the Board in dismissing the appellant from his teaching position." Previously, in October, 1924, in a letter to Mr. Glassberg he made still clearer his mental process in dealing with the appeal. "You will, of course, understand," he wrote, "that the appeal must be decided *in accordance with the facts as they were made to appear* upon the hearing before the Board of Education." How the facts were made to appear to Mr. Glassberg's disadvantage is shown by the careful coaching by Mr. Gilbert E. Raynor, Principal of the Commercial High School, of the pupils who were to testify against Mr. Glassberg and his ominous mark of "Glassberg witness" on the records of those who testified in his favor. The temper in which these facts were interpreted by the Board is characterized by its presiding officer as one of "passion and prejudice." And yet according to Mr. Gilbert's statement the original decision is not to be revised because it was in accordance with the testimony so presented and evaluated.

This point is worth emphasizing because Mr. Gilbert with frank impudence or blunt sincerity has stated a cardinal point in that 100 percent Americanism in which he fears Mr. Glassberg may be lacking. No people is so averse to revising its judgment, to confessing itself in error, as that of the United States. With us the res acta quickly becomes the chose jugée; "the moving finger writes and having writ moves on," and it is quite unnecessary to raise the question of "piety or wit" to "lure it back to cancel half a line," or tears of repentance to wash it out, because in such matters we have no piety or wit, and least of all tears. It is, of course, true in general that the point in which the mass falls farthest short of individual morality is in the salutary practice of confession and atonement; and yet other nations have now and then achieved it. Thirty years ago France was tearing itself to pieces in a campaign for justice to the Jew Dreyfus, and in the end the most powerful and important interest in the state, that of the national defense, was forced to yield to a righteous public opinion and to give its leaders over to punishment and disgrace. Indeed, France has had a tradition of revision since the days when Voltaire forced the Count of Toulouse to confess and make reparation. In the United States we see Mooney in prison, convicted on perjured testimony; seven members of the I. W. W. in Washington, convicted by a verdict which half the jury have admitted under oath was extorted by fear of the American Legion; Sacco and Vanzetti in Massachusetts, subject to the law's delay aggravated by subtle and cruel ingenuity.

The most serious and ominous examples of a national mind closed to the possibility of revision are to be seen in our dealings with other peoples. We all agree that no national action is so stupid and so criminal as an unnecessary war. Other peoples have made stupid and criminal wars, and no one thinks of denying it. Englishmen generally accept the opinion in regard to the Crimean War, that "England put her money on the wrong horse." Our war with Spain offers a fair comparison. It was preceded by a drastic ultimatum, to which Spain yielded in terms which in the opinion of our Ambassador at Madrid

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left no excuse for hostilities. Nevertheless rather than risk balking the blood lust of his countrymen, McKinley sent in his war message to Congress with so perfunctory a reference to Spain's surrender that it passed unnoticed and the war was on. Does any American historian with popular appeal tell the plain, unmitigated facts? Would any considerable body of Americans read him if he did, or reading bring in their own minds the verdict against McKinley and his administration? The Spanish War left us with the Philippine War as a legacy, in which our arms were disgraced by quite wanton atrocities. About the same time the English were subduing the Boers by means of the concentration camps. But the protest against such brutality, even in the name of military necessity, appealed to that rare phenomenon, a national conscience. The English admitted and repudiated the "policy of barbarism" when they accepted the man who used that phrase as Prime Minister, to undo the evil that they had wrought. In the United States the atrocities in the Philippines were ignored, condoned, forgotten—and were followed fifteen years later by similar occurrences in Haiti.

To what traits in American national psychology shall we attribute this fetishism of the chose jugée? It is doubtless in part due to the self-consciousness of youth, and may be outgrown with years and experience. Our complacency is certainly fostered by our habit of isolation which limits that experience and shields us from the criticism of our peers among nations. Perhaps the most valid argument for the participation of the United States in the League of Nations is that such participation would force us to live in the society of other countries, and make us in some fashion subject to the public opinion of the world, which now we are permitted ignorantly to despise. But the chief cause of our self-righteousness, as of our isolation, is the unworthy one of sheer lack of interest, inertia. Just as we permit special individual and corporate interests to fatten at the expense of our national resources, so we permit special interests to become vested in the historical heritage of our past. All our wars have become sources of prestige or privilege to someone—to veterans who find in them their moral if not their material livelihood, to their descendants, who are watchfully on guard lest any criticism creep into the record. To be specific, a single event which the American people gravely need to understand and judge in the interest of their relations with Mexico is the bombardment of Vera Cruz. Another adventure which they should understand and judge is the military expedition into Russia and the assistance variously extended to the campaigns of Kolchak, Denikin and Wrangel.

The Woodrow Wilson Foundation might seem specially constituted for the purpose of revising the record which has become part of our recent history; but we doubt that it will serve this purpose. And after all, what does it matter? Our indifference is not merely passive but active, born of our progress into new fields. The past is a filing cabinet, and we have the disinclination of the business man, invited by new enterprises, to go into it. It is a tedious and unprofitable business to look through the files. We may not find what we wanted—we may find something unpleasant that we had forgotten.

Mr. Gilbert's rule of procedure is best. The appeal from Philip drunk to Philip sober is in order, in the case of Glassberg and Mooney as in those of McKinley, Roosevelt and Wilson, but it is determined beforehand in accordance with the facts as they were made to appear to Philip drunk.

Where Is My Public

FROM the authors comes a melancholy cry. They can no longer count on their public. It reads them by the hundreds of thousands one year, next year it deserts them, only to reappear—in part—the year after, and disappear again, perhaps for good. Through no fault of the authors, they feel. Mere fickleness—a disease of the times. O for the good old days when the Great Novelist would turn out his masterpiece in one, two, three volumes; in monthly parts in family magazines, and find his public, like the old-fashioned family, growing from year to year, writing him letters, reading him first, last and all the time, spreading the gospel and faithful, faithful to the end.

There is no reading of authors now, they complain, only of best sellers. The name counts for little, and small loyalty is attached to it; the public is no longer a responsible herd, no longer cattle, but an independent flock of fleas, jumping madly from one book to another, skipping, for no apparent reason, three perfectly good books on the way, agitated, mercurial, unpredictable and, flealike, knowing no shepherd. This saddens the authors; it is a reflection upon them, though they are too wise to imagine that it is a valid reflection; and worse, it is a reflection upon the times, upon these wild crazy years of instability. Have we lost all standards, they wail; are we to continue hopping about? Is literature no longer a countryside, divided by fences into private pastures where each honest author may count his crops growing from year to year? Is every reader henceforth a maverick?

Yes, from now on the dear reader is a maverick, and nobody can ever count on locking him up in the stable again. The dear reader, from having been a feeder, is now a nibbler, and the reason is because there is so much more fodder and so many more extraordinary varieties of it for him to nibble at. To pursue the analogy of food: think of the old days when every man ate in his own house pies of his own wife's baking. And what has happened? A man now eats steak at home, sits down to crab-

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meat at a neighbor's down the street, devours delicatessen viands across the way, spins on a stool over oyster stew, goes to Childs, to the Ritz, to the railway horseshoe, swallows malted milkshakes in the lunch hour, munches Tootsie Rolls in the subway, or often does not, in his reverence for efficiency, eat anything at all. He has no habits, save that of eating. And nowadays the reader has no habits, unless it be that of reading. And what does he read? or rather, what doesn't he read? There is nothing in the world he can't read for a small expenditure. So he nibbles everywhere. The Constant Nymph, System, Haldeman-Julius, 'Smatter Pop, Wells's Outline of History, Wife Knifes Self and Friend after Divorce, Mind in the Making, Bugs Baer, True Stories, The Electrical Engineer, Want Ads, How to Make Your Brain Bigger, Eddie Guest, Brisbane, and the Bible. What authors he reads are sandwiched, just as you see, haphazard between newsstand stuff. He hears this is good, and that is better, but he hasn't time for either, and borrows St. Reymont's The Peasants, in four volumes. If this Nobel Prize winner produces something else, just try to make our reader tackle it. "No," he'll say, "I've read one of his already." Life's too short. A little of everything.

It is true that the flood of magazines has had something to do with it. Thackeray never had to compete with Snappy Stories. There is no competition other than the mere existence of Snappy Stories, its price, and its province on the stands, and if Thackeray were alive today he too might feel his public unsteady as water beneath his feet, not because this modern public is necessarily less intelligent, but simply because there is so much more for it to read. The magazines are cutting in on the sale of books—most publishers will tell you that. And yet these same publishers will turn around and admit that more people are reading better books than ever used to. Intelligent, difficult books are bought now which hardly anybody would have bought not so very many years ago. Reading makes more reading.

And nibbling makes more nibbling. But the knowledge that more are nibbling than ever will not console the author for the loss of his public. He feels as badly about it as if the public were a sort of wife to him, of whom by all the tenets of morality he could reasonably expect faithfulness. We may think the authors expect too much, but for Literature we ought to reserve our deeper concern. Time is chopping her into little pieces, shuffling and redealing her like a pack of cards, until we can no longer see her face. With the disappearance of the old-fashioned reader who read all of somebody's works as they came out, she has lost dignity and form. Literature, as she lives in readers' minds, is no longer stable, continuous; she changes from year to year, with the skipping about of those who read from one book to another. Can these people give a clear answer when we ask them "Well, how's Literature this year?" Will they not rather try to describe her as a collection of books which, for accidental reasons they no longer remember, they happen to have read?

For Literature is not a collection of books, but of authors, and since we should look at her in that fashion, so we should read her also. If we would know what our age is doing—an "age" is becoming an ever shorter and shorter span of years—we will find the truth not in a list of volumes, labeled 1925, but in the growth of the many men and women who made these books, in their increase or decline, a story of spiritual seasons which, viewed as a whole, adds to our opinion of those books something which is more than the knowledge of personalities. Though we must admit that all literatures seemed most chaotic to their contemporaries, when they also seemed realest, when they possessed qualities which the passing of time wipes forever away. This disordered age will leave its chroniclers, who will shuffle laboriously through our straw and buried treasure, at length to emerge with theories, chapters, influences, in a neat pattern which to us would have seemed absurd. And probably the authors' complaint, like all the complaints about good old times, is not wholly true. Nobody ever has had as faithful a public as they would invite us to imagine. To its own inhabitants, each year, each age seemed more chaotic than we, by the most difficult reversal of our natural impulses, could imagine it to have been. And perhaps the readers of that year, that age skipped merrily about from author to author just as they are accused of doing now.

Whether the authors are right or wrong, their plaint is useless. There's nothing to be done about it. Their readers will continue to desert them for others out of sheer twentieth century energy, and no sense of loyalty will bring them back. The authors can go over the dark pastures of the magazine and the short story and the newspaper serial calling "Co' boss! Co' boss!" for all they are worth, but the reader won't come home, even if he listens. More likely he won't even be listening, but will be found, along with most other substantial citizens, with a radio headpiece over his ears.

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Great Britain's "Cross of Gold"*

I.

Why British Unemployment Is Worse.

WORLD trade and British home consumption are both moderately good—running on a level keel, midway between slump and boom. The United States has had a year of abundant prosperity; India and the Dominions are doing fairly well; in France and Italy unemployment is non-existent or negligible; and in Germany during the first six months of 1925 the numbers receiving the dole decreased rapidly to 4.5 percent against 12 percent in Great Britain. The aggregate of world production is probably greater than at any time since 1914. Therefore Great Britain's troubles are not primarily due either to world-wide depression or to reduced consumption at home. And it is obvious what does cause them. It is a question of *relative price* there and abroad. The prices of British exports in the international market are too high. About this there is no difference of opinion.

Why are they too high? The orthodox answer is to blame it on the British working-man for working too little and getting too much. In some industries and some grades of labor, particularly the unskilled, this is true; and other industries, for example the railways, are over-staffed. But there is no more truth in it than there was a year ago. Moreover, it is not true in those export industries where unemployment is greatest.

On the contrary, the explanation can be found for certain in another direction. For we know as a fact that the value of sterling money abroad has been raised by about 12 percent, whilst its purchasing power over British labor is unchanged. This alteration in the external value of sterling money has been the deliberate act of the British government and the present troubles of our export industries are the inevitable and predictable consequence of it. The following table shows that the exchange movements of the last year have worsened Great Britain's competitive position with her chief industrial rivals by 12 percent or more:

Percentage increase in the value of sterling (middle of July, 1925) since June, 1924.

Italy	31 percent	Sweden	11 percent
France	27 "	Brazil	9 "
Germany	13 "	Holland	5 "
Japan	13 "	China	3 "
United States	12 "	Switzerland	2 "
Czecho-Slovakia	12 "	India	—6 "
Belgium	12 "	Argentine	—10 "

The policy of improving the foreign-exchange value of sterling up to its pre-War value in gold from being about 12 percent below it, means that British exporters have to reduce their sterling prices, for coal or iron or shipping freights or whatever it may be, by 12 percent in order to be on a competitive level, unless prices rise elsewhere. Thus the policy of improving the exchange by 12 percent involves a reduction of 12 percent in the sterling receipts of British export industries.

Now, if these industries found that their expenses for wages and for transport and for everything else were falling 12 percent at the same time, they could afford to cut their prices and would be no worse off than before. But of course, this does not happen. Since they use, and their employes consume, all kinds of articles produced at home, it is impossible for them to cut their prices 12 percent, unless wages and expenses in home industries generally have fallen 12 percent. Meanwhile the weaker export industries are reduced to a bankrupt condition. Failing a fall in the value of gold itself, nothing can retrieve their position except a general fall of all internal prices and wages. Thus the policy of improving the exchange by 10 percent was, sooner or later, a policy of reducing everyone's wages by 2s. in the pound. He who wills the end wills the means. What now faces the British government is the ticklish task of carrying out their own dangerous and unnecessary decision.

The statistics bear out this reasoning. The table on the following page is, by itself, an adequate explanation of the difficulties of British export industries compared with a year ago.

This table shows that a year ago the cost of living and the level of wages in Great Britain, expressed in terms of gold, bore nearly the same relation to the dollar cost of living in the United States as before the War. Since then the sterling exchange has been raised by 12 percent, without any corresponding change in the sterling-cost of living and the sterling-level of wages. It also shows that we are still asking in sterling just as much for our exports as when sterling was worth 12 percent less in exchange value.

The effect has been the more severe because British industry was not free from trouble a year ago. Whilst, at that date, sterling-wages and sterling-cost of living were in conformity with values in the United States, they were already too high compared with those in some European countries. It was also probable that certain British export industries were overstocked both with plant and with labor, and that some transference of capital and of men into home industries was desirable and, in the long run, even inevitable. Thus there was already an awkward problem; and one of the arguments against raising the international value of sterling was the fact that it greatly aggravated, instead of mitigating,

* This article is a condensation of part of a booklet by J. M. Keynes, published in America by Harcourt, Brace and Company under the title, The Economic Consequences of Sterling Parity.

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an existing disparity between internal and external values, and that, by committing us to a period of deflation, it necessarily postponed active measures of capital expansion at home, such as might facilitate the transference of labor into the home trades. British wages, measured in gold, are now 15 percent higher than they were a year ago. The gold-cost of living in England is now so high compared with what it is in Belgium, France, Italy, and Germany that the workers in those countries can accept a gold-wage 30 percent lower than what our workers receive without suffering at all in the amount of their real wages. What wonder that our export trades are in trouble!

The British and American Positions Compared
(Pre-War—100.)

	United States Cost of Living.	Great Britain Cost of Living.		Great Britain Wages.		Great Britain Price of Exports.	
	Gold.	Gold.	Sterling.	Gold.	Sterling.	Gold.	Sterling.
March, 1924	156	157	178	155	176	170	193
June	154	150	169	157	178	164	185
October	157	162	176	164	178	175	190
December	158	174	181	172	179	181	188
March, 1925	158	176	179	177	181	189	192
April	158	172	175	178	181	184	187
May	158	172	173	180	181	186	187
June	—	172	172	181	181	187	187
July	—	173	173	180	180	—	—

The export industries are suffering because they are the *first* to be asked to accept the 12 percent reduction. If *everyone* was accepting a similar reduction at the same time, the cost of living would fall, so that the lower money wage would represent nearly the same real wage as before. But, in fact, there is no machinery for effecting a simultaneous reduction. Deliberately to raise the value of sterling money in England means, therefore, engaging in a struggle with each separate group in turn, with no prospect that the final result will be fair, and no guarantee that the stronger groups will not gain at the expense of the weaker.

The working classes cannot be expected to understand, better than cabinet ministers, what is happening. Those who are attacked first are faced with a depression of their standard of life, because the cost of living will not fall until all the others have been successfully attacked too; and, therefore, they are justified in defending themselves. Nor can the classes which are first subjected to a reduction of money wages be guaranteed that this will be compensated later by a corresponding fall in the cost of living, and will not accrue to the benefit of some other class. Therefore they are bound to resist so long as they can; and it must be war, until those who are economically weakest are beaten to the ground.

This state of affairs is not an inevitable consequence of a decreased capacity to produce wealth. I see no reason why, with good management, real wages need be reduced on the average. It is the consequence of a misguided monetary policy.

II.

The Policy of the Bank of England.

The effect of a high exchange is both to encourage imports and to discourage exports, thus turning the balance of trade against us. It is at this stage that the Bank of England becomes interested; for if nothing was done we should have to pay the adverse balance in gold. The Bank of England has applied, accordingly, two effective remedies. The first remedy is to put obstacles in the way of our usual lending abroad by means of an embargo on foreign loans and, recently, on Colonial loans also, even to the extent of requiring loans maturing here to be paid off out of funds raised abroad. And the second remedy is to encourage the United States to lend us money by maintaining the unprecedented situation of a bill rate ½ to 1 percent higher in London than in New York. The Bank of England has also made special arrangements with the Central Banks of Holland and of the Union of South Africa for assistance in the form of gold, and with the New York Federal Reserve Bank for the purchase of sterling bills in certain contingencies.

The efficacy of these methods for balancing our account is beyond doubt; I believe that they might remain efficacious for a considerable length of time. For we start with a wide margin of strength. Before the War our capacity to lend abroad was, according to the Board of Trade, about £181,000,000, equivalent to £280,000,000 at the present price level; and even in 1923 the Board of Trade estimated our net surplus at £102,000,000. Since new foreign investments bring in no immediate return, it follows that we can reduce our exports by £100,000,000 a year, without any risk of insolvency, provided we reduce our foreign investments by the same amount. So far as the maintenance of the Gold Standard is concerned, it is a matter of indifference whether we have £100,000,000 worth of foreign investment or £100,000,000 worth of unemployment. If those who used to produce exports lose their jobs, nevertheless, our financial equilibrium remains perfect, and the Governor of the Bank of England runs no risk of losing gold, provided that the loans, which were formerly paid over in the shape of those exports, are curtailed to an equal extent. Moreover,

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our credit as a borrower is still very good. By borrowing in various ways we can not only meet any deficit but the governor of the Bank of England can even make additions to his stock of gold, if it pleases him to do so.

The President of the Board of Trade calculates that, during the year ended last May, it is probable that there was no actual deficit on our trade account, which was about square. If this is correct, there must be a substantial deficit now. In addition, the embargo on foreign investment is only partially successful. It cannot hold back all types of foreign issues and it cannot prevent British investors from purchasing securities direct from New York. It is here, therefore, that the Bank of England's other remedies come in. In particular, by maintaining discount rates in London at a sufficient margin above discount rates in New York, it can induce the New York money market to lend a sufficient sum* to the London money market to balance both our trade deficit and the foreign investments which British investors are still buying in spite of the embargo.

Nevertheless the policy of maintaining money rates in London at a level which will attract and retain loans from New York does not really differ in any important respect from the French policy, which we have so much contemned, of supporting the exchange with the help of loans from Messrs. J. P. Morgan. Our policy would only differ from the French policy if the high rate of discount was not only intended to attract American money, but was also part of a policy for restricting credit at home. This is the aspect to which we must now attend.

To pay for unemployment by changing over from being a lending country to being a borrowing country is admittedly a disastrous course, and I do not doubt that the authorities of the Bank of England share this view. They dislike the embargo on foreign issues, and they dislike having to attract short-loan money from New York. They may do these things to gain a breathing space; but, if they are to live up to their own principles, they must use the breathing space to effect what are euphemistically called "the fundamental adjustments." With this object in view there is only one step which lies within their power—namely, to restrict credit. This, in the circumstances, is the orthodox policy of the gold party; the adverse trade balance indicates that our prices are too high, and the way to bring them down is by dear money and the restriction of credit. When this medicine has done its work, there will no longer be any need to restrict foreign loans or to borrow abroad.

Now what does this mean in plain language? Our problem is to reduce money-wages and, through them, the cost of living, with the idea that, when the circle is complete, real wages will be as high, or nearly as high, as before. By what modus operandi does credit restriction attain this result?

In no other way than by the deliberate intensification of unemployment. The object of credit restriction, in such a case, is to withdraw from employers the financial means to employ labor at the existing level of prices and wages. The policy can only attain its end by intensifying unemployment without limit, until the workers are ready to accept the necessary reduction of money-wages under the pressure of hard facts.

This is the so-called "sound" policy, which is demanded as a result of the rash act of pegging sterling at a gold value, which it did not—measured in its purchasing power over British labor—possess as yet. It is a policy, nevertheless, from which any humane or judicious person must shrink. So far as I can judge, the Governor of the Bank of England shrinks from it. But what is he to do, swimming, with his boat burnt, between the devil and the deep sea? At present, it appears, he compromises. He applies the "sound" policy half-heartedly; he avoids calling things by their right names; and he hopes—this is his best chance—that something will turn up.

Up to the beginning of August some curtailment of credit was in progress with a view to a reduction of the price level. The subsidy to the coal industry and the reduction of the bank rate to 4½ percent seem to indicate that, for political reasons, this policy has now been abandoned for the time being. Thus the disequilibrium in the British trade balance, due to the overvaluation of sterling and the consequent depression of the export trades, is being covered by an embargo on foreign loans and various arrangements to borrow.

JOHN MAYNARD KEYNES.

London.

* The Harvard Economic Service estimates that in recent months American banks have advanced to the London money market between £200,000,000 and £300,000,000.

Oh For a Witless Age

Humour is warm, wit cold.
Wit can be a common scold,
But humour can laugh and do no harm;
For wit is cold, humour warm.

And oh for a witless age again
Of clear, upstanding, laughing men,
After a humourless age like this
Of dapper coils and lisping hiss!

Nothing hearty, not even hate,
Never a rollicking reprobate,
But only fangs that peer and piddle!
Oh for some laughter from the middle!

Not till we can wipe from the brow
Wetter mirth than cheers it now,
Will a time be here for wit again
To cool the laughing hearts of men.

WITTER BYNNER.

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Nothing but a Coal Factory*

AND I said to him, 'It's nothing but a God damn factory. It's a coal factory, that's what it is.' "

The place was a miner's kitchen in Southern Illinois. The miner himself was speaking, and the subject of conversation was a magnificent new mine in the neighborhood in which all the loading of coal was to be done by machinery. The remark, moreover, points both to the fact and to the human significance of a great change now going on in the technique of the soft coal industry. For the miner's word of description is an accurate one; the trade journals themselves echo it in headlines claiming that this or that innovation Raises Mine to Factory Level, and all observers of the new ways of mining agree that they are beginning to bring factory methods and the factory psychology into the work of the mines. But why a *"God damn"* factory? Surely factories are safer and lighter and cleaner places than the insides of coal mines. Why, then, did the miner so thoroughly dislike the change? First, perhaps, because he himself had once worked for Henry Ford at Highland Park. But second and more important, because he was a typical citizen of an industry that has preserved even to the present day an amazing degree of freedom for the individual worker.

"The miner is a little peculiar"—or so an operator once told a government commission—and the working conditions that have made him so are far out of line with the mass production and the mass discipline of the modern factory. For the miner's work leaves him alone with his buddy at the end of a narrow tunnel somewhere in the darkness of the mine, pressing forward into the solid coal with auger and pick and shovel and meeting by his own devices the innumerable small problems of a rough and varied and dangerous job. By his own devices, quite literally, for he is a workman who sees his boss only once a day, or less; and even when the foreman does come to the man's room, the piece work system and the customary arrangements leave him little enough of direction or of driving to do. For the working place belongs to the pair of miners "almost as a personal possession" for months at a time, and the method and pace of working are considered very largely their own affair.

"Why should the boss come dictatin' to me where to place my shots?" demands the typical coal-digger. "I pay for the powder." "Why should he try to tell me where to set my props? I'm a practical miner. I know how to take care of myself." "What business is it of his how fast I work? I'll load all the cars he'll give me. I'd like nine a day—one for me, one for the old woman, one for each of the kids."

The same attitude extends also to the regulation of attendance and the working day. "If a man has been in here loading coal three or four days, he's done something."—This time it is a foreman speaking, and a foreman in non-union Logan!—"If he wants to lay off the next day, that's his business and not mine." And the miner's right to go home when he pleases, to escape the tedium of "waitin' for cars" in the cool dampness underground or to help cook the dinner for the boarders on the night shift or for any one of countless other reasons, is even more deeply rooted in the customs of the industry. A group of miners were once discussing an attempt to insist on the full working day. "That's taking a little freedom away from a man, hain't it?" asked one of them. "I think *a man ought to know when he is tired.*"

To this individualistic independence—or indiscipline—that comes from the scattering of the working places and the miner's position as a sort of petty contractor underground, the group traditions of the workers add other elements. For although miners work in great isolation, they live under conditions that make for unusual solidarity of feeling. "We haven't got a farmer or anybody else in the town," said one of them, "except one hotel-keeper." That is the extreme, but it is true that miners, more often than almost any other workers, do live in isolated camps and villages of their own—communities to which all the men come home black or in which they scrub the coal off each other's backs in the common washhouse—and through their life runs the influence of the old traditions of the industry, passed on from British miners of an older generation and strongly reinforcing the stubborn individualism of the working places.

In more than half the coal fields, moreover, these traditions are buttressed by the strength of a powerful union, and its active mine committees do much to defend the individual rights of the miners and even to give them a part in the running of the mines. The joint agreements, to be sure, piously affirm the absolutism of the employer's right to "the management of the mine and the direction of the working force"; and operating officials sometimes declare indignantly that they "didn't know it was the rule for the mine foreman to go to the committee to ask what to do." But in actual controversy the union is likely to act on the principle laid down by one of its leaders that "there should be a limit to any right the operator has got," and whatever the rules the miners themselves are likely to "go to the committees for everything." It is to them that they go for help in getting extra pay for cleaning up a wet place or a fall of rock, or to insist on the equal dis-

* This article is based on a book called The Miner's Freedom which is just being issued by the Marshall Jones Company in the Amherst Memorial Fellowships Series.

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tribution of the cars on which their earnings depend (so that no driver will "give mine cars for beer"), or to try to "get their jobs back" in case of discharge. If the safety laws are not being enforced, or the men are afraid that a certain creek will break in and flood the mine, it is to the committee that they are likely to turn. If a group of them have quit work on account of bad air, it is often a matter of course that the foreman and committee should go together to inspect their places; and I have seen such a trip start with the boss down on his knees drawing a map of the ventilating system as the beginning of a long discussion of remedies. On these and scores of other matters, in fact, ranging from the troubles of a pair of buddies temperamentally unsuited for sharing a place up through more serious matters of earnings and safety to occasional instances in which the committee takes dramatic charge of a life-and-death emergency in the mine, the committeemen's duties keep them continually "dipping into management that is none of their business"—as many operators would put it—and adding to the sheer indiscipline of the individual miners something of the feeling and practice of a collective freedom.

Out of these two sets of influences there comes a quite unusual type of working life. Other industries, to be sure, can match certain of its features. No doubt the man of the old-time mackerel fleet, fishing "literally 'on his own hook'" and from his own special station in the boat, was even more independent in the matter of payment; and perhaps in lumbering the individual is still left as much to his own devices on the job itself. In the printers' "chapels," also, there are workers who cling to trade customs even older than those of the mines. And in the clothing trades there are union shop chairmen and chairladies who exercise a workers' control that is quite as vigorous and even more insistent than that of the mine committeemen. But there are not many industries that are like soft coal mining even in one of these respects, and there is surely no other, unless it be anthracite, in which all these things are combined. *The miner's freedom* is unique in American industrial life, and the indiscipline of the mines is so utterly unlike the order and regimentation of a plant like Ford's that it is hard to believe that the two are continuing to exist side by side. Nor indeed is it likely that they will. For already engineers and other critics are declaring that "mass production in the fullest sense of the term, Ford methods in short, must be practiced all the way from the face of the coal"; and as the story of the "coal factory" suggests, a vigorous movement in that direction is already in process.

"The industry is greatly venturing toward the future," or so the trade journals declaim; and each of the experiments to which they refer, diverse as they are, tends in one way or another to make a mine "more like a shop." The simplest way of doing this is just to graft on to the old-fashioned habits of the mines some of the externals of factory regulation; and one great coal-consuming company began its mining—and amazed a whole coal field—by bringing over direct from its factory a rule against smoking and a huge stack of pink, white and yellow slips for reporting absences. A more serious experiment is that of another large company that quadrupled its number of bosses and devised an ingenious set of checks for making sure that they would really "do all the thinking for the men." "Joe's boss." So a superintendent explained the system to an Italian loader. "Joe's king in here. You know, same as in Italy."

But by far the greater number of the ventures in the new discipline are coming by way of the introduction of machinery to take over part or all of the old-time miner's work. The devices are too many to mention, but the one which chances to mimic the look of Ford's most closely is the "face conveyor" with which gangs of task workers under straw bosses shovel coal all day long onto a knee-high moving belt, "loading coal by the acre," as their own phrase goes, "instead of by the ton"; and the most spectacular of the machines is the great battering ram of a "cutter-and-loader" that smashes and tears its way into the solid coal without help of pick or of powder. The most significant of all, however, are the three or four hundred smaller loading machines that are nosing their way into piles of coal in almost every field and that are already "fighting onto" their elevating conveyors some four or five million tons of our yearly coal supply.

With all these methods the more exact control over the work is given as a chief advantage. "The Shuveloder," declares a typical advertisement, "doesn't lubricate on moonshine whiskey. It doesn't kick about bad air, heat or cold. It loads as much at 4 P. M. as at 8 A. M."; and the men who attend it are expected to imitate its regularity. Already the new technique in these various forms is winning its way with scores of companies, and there are many prophecies—and many indications—of the much more widespread and the much more complete mechanization of the mines in the near future. "And when they *are* mechanized"—so I have heard the confident statement—"the man won't be a miner any more, coming to work when he pleases. He'll be a mechanic"—or an unskilled laborer—"and he'll do what he's told." "Give the face conveyor, the loading machine and the electric drill steady work," declares one exultant advocate, "and flesh and blood shall not stand against them!"

"The miners of my local"—so a union delegate once reported—"do feel for more liberty than money." And "more liberty" than other workers, with freedom from the bogie of the "boss lookin' down the shirt collar" that has driven many exminers back again from the factories to the mines, is the one thing that has set their work off from other rough and arduous jobs. That liberty, how-

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ever, has rested on the two foundations of the old technique and the power of the miner's union, and the current revolution not only cuts away the older working methods but threatens to undermine the influence of the union as well. The more rapid spread of the new technique in certain non-union regions is already a factor in causing the widespread unemployment in the union fields, and the great displacement of workers as the change advances may long keep the United Mine Workers fighting a desperate defensive battle.

What, then, of the future of the miner's freedom? What possibilities for individual initiative can be left open even under the new technique? What compensations can the miner be given off the job for his loss of working freedom? And what chance is there that the union, in spite of the dangers confronting it, may replace the old indiscipline with the collective freedom of a more responsible type of workers' control? It is these questions that the present article is intended to raise. "Just now more than ever," reports Coal Age, "methods are changing." Now more than ever, then, it is important to examine their bearing on the quality of the working life. Those who are deciding to change the industry for quite other reasons are incidentally voting a very different sort of life to the miner. My purpose is to picture the contrasting types of work vividly enough to bring these values also within the range of judgment and current decision.

CARTER GOODRICH.

Autumn Dialogue

"No, no," she cries, "I will not warm my fingers
On these charred sticks you long to huddle over.
Wait, if you like, to see if a spark still lingers;
I know the sort of ash you will discover."

"But look," he urges, "you who love strange *timbres,*
Here are new harmonies of dying color.
Have you no joy in such pale gold and amber?
Does gray mean nothing more to you now than dolor?"

"No, no," she answers, "it is you who relish
This dwindling death; you like to feel the smoulder
Creep into words which, as you scrape and polish,
Make the thin air about us even colder."

Then he, "And what are yours but words that crumple
Their borrowed colors like those clouds at sunset
Which seemed more fixed than any earthly temple
Yet turned to smoke before the first dark onset."

A stone grinds under her heel; he does not hold her;
The twig she snaps falls with a flaking of rust.
The moon shows an edge like the curve of a dead girl's shoulder.
And earth continues to fondle its acre of dust.

LOUIS UNTERMEYER.

Washington Notes

IT is sad to record that the politicians seem to have been too much for General Andrews. He is a good man and an honest one, is the General. He means well and will get better results than any of his predecessors—perhaps as good as can be got by anyone.

However, it would certainly have been better if he had not laid quite so much stress upon his determination to compel the politicians to keep their dirty paws off the Prohibition enforcement department and had dwelt just a trifle less persistently upon his purpose to have at the head of each of the twenty-eight units a big, broad-minded business man of the $100,000 a year type. If he had been slightly less insistent upon this the personnel of the unit heads when announced would not have been so distressing to those who had accepted the propaganda at full face value and looked for the shiniest sort of new deal all around. The fact is that the politicians succeeded in holding, under General Andrews, most of the men whose appointments they had secured under Mr. Haynes; and where changes were made they were due primarily to political influence. In Virginia, Maryland, Kentucky, Ohio and New Jersey the selections were unquestionably made upon the recommendations of Republican Senators and organization leaders. The only fights were fights among the party people.

Probably General Andrews is more disappointed than anyone else. He had a nice, snappy idea but he could not make the grade with it. No one save the most completely unsophisticated ever thought he would.

In fairness one thing ought to be said for this administration in connection with Prohibition enforcement: whether it gets anywhere or not there is unquestionably more sincerity back of the effort than there has been since the Eighteenth Amendment became part of the Constitution. Also there is infinitely less hypocrisy. In the Senate and House there are plenty of men who consistently vote dry, regularly champion the Prohibition cause, who rarely miss an opportunity to take a drink of liquor, keep it in their homes and serve it to their friends. That, however, is not true so far as the executive officers of the administration are concerned—except in isolated cases, which is a very great contrast indeed to the days of the Harding administration. Under Mr. Harding there was not the slightest personal sincerity in the support of the dry cause and no man conversant with conditions in Washington during those days will contend there was.

Whatever else may be said of it, that cannot be said of the Coolidge administration. The day of public protestation in favor of Prohibition and private drinking upon the part of officials high up in the administration has gone out. Mr. Coolidge does not touch liquor himself nor does his Attorney General. More important perhaps than that is the fact that the Assistant Attorney General—"Wild Bill" Donovan, who really runs the Department of Justice, does not personally indulge these days in alcoholic stimulant and openly and frequently lets it be known that he considers any man charged with the duty of upholding the Constitution and occupying a public position connected with the enforcement of the Prohibition law who personally violates that law a hypocritical and unworthy person. Mr. Hoover is personally convinced that regardless of its defects in the way of enforcement Prohibition in the United States is a huge economic success,

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which can be proved in a score of ways. Other members of the Cabinet share these views.

Mr. Coolidge's personal attitude is exceedingly intolerant toward members of his administration who violate the Volstead act. Upon at least two occasions of which I know he has let it be known that he considers it improper conduct calculated to reflect upon him and his administration. Not long ago a member of one of the big government boards who was sitting with friends at a table in a Washington country club, left the table and left the club when a bottle of whiskey was produced. The explanation he gave later was that Mr. Coolidge had told him he thought men holding high positions in the government ought to discourage that sort of thing so far as they could, and he could not afford to be seen sitting at the table while the liquor was being consumed, regardless of the fact that he would not drink any himself.

His complete personal sincerity in this matter is typical of the Coolidge character. So too is the meaninglessness of those Swampscott statements to the effect that there was to be no politics in the new Prohibition enforcement staff and that General Andrews was to have a "free hand." The truth is, as I see it, that in this administration there will be in this matter far more personal consistency and decency than there was in the last but not a great deal more of political vigor and independence.

In view of the expressed confidence of the Republican leaders—chief among them the Hon. Smoot—that the new Mellon bill will be speedily passed by Congress, in fact out of the way by the middle of March, the extraordinary yapping of the Curtis daily publications in Philadelphia and New York for an extra session in October seems extremely futile, though not foolish considered as journalistic enterprise. It is really surprising that they have not got further in their crusade to expedite the reduction in taxes. One would have thought the big business interests which these papers represent so faithfully would have got behind them strongly in this idea. Undoubtedly at one time such was their notion and there is no doubt that last July when these organs began to urge the President to call the extra session they had certain assurances of support which were later withdrawn.

It is further true that just after he went to Swampscott Mr. Coolidge felt that it would be necessary to convene Congress in extra session if the tax bill were to be got through before the summer of 1926. In this thought most of his business advisers then concurred. However, they had a change of heart. It was decided that the chances of the new Mellon proposition's going through intact would be improved if the two months between October 1 and December 1 were utilized in tilling the soil of public opinion and concentrating hard on newspaper propaganda. Better results could be achieved this way than by an effort to force the bill through ahead of schedule. My belief is that it was Mr. Mellon himself who vetoed the extra session idea. It was not hard to convince Mr. Coolidge, who is never happy with Congress in session, that no real gain would be made in departing from the regular procedure. Between them they let the Curtis publications down hard.

Actually of course, if there is to be a cut, there is no sound reason for not calling an extra session and getting it done as quickly as possible. The surplus has been known for months, the administration forces are all lined up, the bill itself has been rounded into final shape. However, Judge Gary, Samuel Rea and other of the Public Ledger's friends in the world of big business express the fear that if convened in extra session Congress might not confine itself to the job of considering the revenue measure but proceed to consider other things that would have a disquieting effect upon business. "We have," they say, "confidence in Mr. Coolidge but not in Congress."

If it were not for the age and eminence of these gentlemen whom the papers so reverently and frequently quote, the temptation would be very great to say that they were silly. It might reasonably be asked of them whether their confidence in Mr. Coolidge does not include confidence in his ability to secure from a Congress in which his own wing of his own party has a clear majority what he wants and to prevent what he does not want. If their confidence in him does not include this then what for goodness sake does it include?

Though only the most optimistic accept the idea that the new revenue bill will be passed by March 15 if Congress does not convene until December, I still do not see how Mr. Coolidge and Mr. Mellon can fail this time to get their proposition over. Their personal strength has been increased, their newspaper support augmented, their prestige and power improved. It is inconceivable that they should fail—and yet the fact remains that in close administration circles there is nervousness over the situation and the leaders look forward to the convening of Congress with apprehension. It is hard to understand.

There seems reason to believe the Democrats will not make the sort of fight this time they did last. They have no idea of adopting a policy of mere obstruction. Whether it will amount to much or not I am unable of course to say but there is to be held in New York a small, select and exclusive conference of Democratic leaders late in November for the purpose of trying to map out for the party in the House and Senate a definite course. I am told there will be fewer than eight men present and not more than two or three will be outsiders. Every effort will be made to keep the conference from becoming public. It is to be held at a private home and to have just as little advertising as possible. It is of course possible that something like a cohesive program will be the outcome of this prospective gathering but I am altogether sceptical of the possibility of getting even eight leaders of this bedraggled party into accord on anything.

The real leadership for the Democrats in the next Senate will be supplied by Senator Borah—and he of course will not be at the conference. No effective opposition to the Coolidge administration program will be possible except when Borah and the little group that follows him combine with the Democrats or vice versa. When they do get together there is a majority in the Senate against the administration, of exactly the same size as that which rejected the name of Charles B. Warren for Attorney General. That was so narrow that one vote made all the difference and it hardly seems possible for the Democrats to form again with the solidity they did in that fight—at least it is certainly not possible for them to do so on the taxation issue with Bruce and Glass and Underwood all out for an even deeper cut in the surtax than the good Mr. Mellon himself. Under the circumstances why the administration leaders should not be serenely sanguine about their bill is a curious thing—but it is a fact.

Washington. T. R. B.

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Ruth Gordon's Eve

The Fall of Eve, by John Emerson and Anita Loos. Booth Theatre, August 31, 1925.

THE first twenty minutes at the Booth are not easy to bear; in this adventure it is indeed the first step that costs. The good and bad angels, two bachelors and two women friends of Eve's, discuss her state of mind, her probable fall through jealousy of her husband. The men and one of the ladies lead off with a bit of exposition in which we see how all of them think it a pity that such a break should come between two really fine people who love each other. Eve's fall is to be compassed, they agree, by Amy Parker's meddling and advising and foul thoughts. In this suburban Eden, Amy Parker is the serpent who hands about the apples of jealous discord.

The writing of this scene is only fair, but could be easily tolerable since we know that Miss Ruth Gordon's Eve will soon be coming along. It is the playing that is so impossible. Mr. Claude King and Mr. Reginald Mason are the men. Miss Diantha Pattison is the woman. The sterility of the scene arises from the fact that the players have no relation to each other. The three of them talk with no rapport, no connection. They are single and solid wholes, solitary individuals pretending to enact together a moment out of life. Miss Pattison sits on the sofa with her gown and her voice well set, but she appears unable to listen to a word, though she looks ornamentally at the speakers. Mr. King and Mr. Mason have no exchange whatever. We see no give and take, no ensemble that is either unified or alive. There is nothing in all the craft of acting that can make up for such dead drouth in mutual response. And so it happens that where we might have a scene, easily over and leading toward a situation, as one moment of life may lead to another more important and pulsing moment, where we might have a quick prelude soon attended, we get in these first twenty minutes of The Fall of Eve only a well-dressed lady pushing her voice half an octave below her fundamental tone, quite below her heart, we may say, and the massive vivacity and male archness of Mr. Mason and Mr. King, as each of them consumes his separate little pudding of egotism.

The despised Amy Parker appears, at the hands of Miss Cora Witherspoon, however, and the action begins. Miss Witherspoon can walk where she starts to, can whack out her business and meanings to the point even, or almost to the point, of making the other three there on the stage seem to be talking to her when they say their answering lines. That at any rate is one way of putting it, of saying that she has direct attack and that she brings a rhythm of life into the play in time for Eve to have something to act at when she in her due turn appears.

Eve did at length appear and from that moment the play seemed much better, and if it was not so, nobody cared. Eve is in a state of mind. She is late. There was a movie that afternoon that she had felt compelled to see. One of her husband's clients, a leading woman, snaky, wicked, vile, she says, was the star of that picture. Tonight that same woman has an opening on Broadway, and Eve's husband has begged her to go with him. This she will never do, not to add to the triumph of that woman, never, and there are other lines and effects of the Parker temptress that she reproduces. Her husband comes, bringing orchids for that evening. They quarrel. They recall their honeymoon in Venice. But not even that can bring Eve to go to the rival's first night. It is only a business connection, but she will not believe so. The loving, exasperated young husband storms out.

Everything then would be over but for the wise and kind bachelor friends, who get Eve drunk and keep her from going home to her mother. Mr. King goes off to bring the husband back, Mr. Mason stays overnight under the same roof with Eve. Eve's husband had once stayed the night under the actress's roof, making out her income tax at the last moment. Now he and Eve are in the same boat. The rest of the play has the burden of bringing the two together again, explanation, mutual forgiveness, love and innocence and the right amount of prosperity for a Broadway young couple, for what would love be there if the husband did not succeed in making a fortune? We must have the bank where the wild thyme grows on Wall Street or the romance is only half romance.

Whether even with the help of the bachelor friends everything would have been over with the play long before the last curtain if it had not been for Miss Gordon, nobody could say. With very slight lapses and up to the very last line—which is a good one—she keeps the piece going, keeps it delightful and heartily varied and lit with talent and shrewd craft.

To say that Miss Gordon repeats her tricks of the last season, in Mrs. Partridge Presents and of earlier seasons, too, no doubt, is not to be quite fair. The tried and trusted tricks and mannerisms are there. Once or twice or three times they are too much underscored, the driving, for example, on the word *pack* when Eve keeps threatening to go back to her mother, the tragi-comic stride now and then, the trick tone in the voice. But very rarely. Compared to what Miss Gordon has done before, the new part is created within a warmer depth; the satirical is more lovingly varied with the pathetic. And more than ever the movements and positions and cues are full of intelligence and a remarkable sense of timing. Remarkable timing, in that respect at least, as in knowing how to dress her special self, most of the people in our theatre could take lessons from her.

There is one thing that Miss Gordon achieves in this performance that bears the promise of something really significant. This Eve, that she plays, the jealous wife in the story, is, it must be remembered, pretty much of a little goose, fuddled, obtuse, impulsive and so on, the familiar recipe for the Ruth Gordon prize silly out of the past. In the story, however, the husband loves her deeply; and in the production he is played by Mr. Arthur Albertson not with any technical skill but with a straight sincerity that keeps things going and credible. What Miss Gordon does is to give you the sense not that we have a case of a man's devotion to a pretty dolly with flapper charms, and not of a mere stage conventional love plot. She makes you feel that he is not a fool to love her, makes you feel that her little life, however awry, muddled and silly it is, draws from sources really generous and plentiful, that her impulses, however sketchy and hectic, arise from genuine and lovable stuff. This is a real achievement in such a part.

There is a promise, if she sticks to her guns and is not thrown off her track or stuck down in the sweet mess of too easy praise, that Miss Gordon can make this puppet of hers, appearing, as it has done more or less, in play after play, a lasting figure. She can widen it toward the comedy, pathos and dumb fantasy of a new image, a kind of feminine Harlequin, muddled by life, bobbing up, riding the winds of folly and endearing desires. Or she may

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grow into an important comedy actress, always rare outside the language of horses and common life. Otherwise, and if she plays only the usual game in the theatre, Miss Gordon will get to be someone whom everybody wants to keep in the same rut exactly; and the figure of her as it grows more familiar will grow less shining, lose some of that blunt, smart light that rests on it now, and come at last to be praised most highly when she has grown most to despise it as something that expresses only a very small part of herself.

Meantime she is a very delightful player.

STARK YOUNG.

Pope and Tennyson

I

MR. LYTTON STRACHEY, by a recently published lecture,* seems to have revived a flicker of the old controversy upon the poetic merits of Pope. His defense has already provoked a demurrer from Mr. Conrad Aiken. Mr. Strachey's defense rests, however, on far different grounds from Byron's championship of Pope against the romantics, of a century ago. The special issue of that time now means little to us: we pride ourselves indeed upon disregarding all the special issues of literature, of taking up no limited position which is capable of being debated against all others, of proposing critically no particular program which renders the products of all other programs unsatisfactory; we have an illusion of appreciating without prejudice the good writing of widely different schools and periods, applauding in each its peculiar success in what it has attempted. Yet our conviction is probably no more than an illusion: like the eighteenth century or the romantics, we are probably capable of seeing in the literature of the past only the qualities which we admire in ourselves. We tend to pick out in a poet whom we would revive chiefly those passages which, taken out of their context, may produce the effect of making him sound most modern. Certain critics have recently by this method performed some veritable conjuring tricks with Dryden; and Mr. Strachey now perhaps does a little for Pope what he makes fun of Pope for doing for Homer: he tends to turn him into a poet of our own age.

Assuming, as a victim of modern taste, however, that the qualities we look for today in poetry are really the most desirable ones, one is persuaded that Mr. Strachey has made out the strongest possible case for Pope as a poet and has appreciated certain aspects of his genius as they have perhaps never been appreciated elsewhere. That there were aspects of Pope which were not appreciated even in his own century seems to be proved by Dr. Johnson's comment on a couplet which Mr. Strachey quotes with special enthusiasm:

> Lo! where Maeotis sleeps, and hardly flows
> The freezing Tanais thro' a waste of snows.

Pope is supposed to have considered these lines the most successful he ever wrote; and Johnson is at a loss to understand why. But, if the story is true, it is quite evident that Pope must have aimed at something more artistically interesting than the mere "rocking-horse" aphorisms for which he was denounced by Wordsworth and the other romantics and for which he is still commonly condemned. These lines illustrate a kind of craftsmanship and intensity in which the romantics, except Keats, did not excel. Mr. Strachey is also particularly happy in citing for his case two of the passages in which Pope opens a somewhat fuller stop than is usual with him: the "fate of old women in society" and the death of Buckingham. These passages are malicious, to be sure, like almost all the effective things in Pope, but they are tragic, also.

II

It is curious to compare Pope with Tennyson, a poet whom, on one of his sides, he resembles.

> The silver eel, in shining volumes roll'd,
> The yellow carp, in scales bedropp'd with gold.

If it weren't for their characteristically metallic weight and ring, which perhaps makes the gold and silver a little more real than the fish, these lines might have been written by Tennyson: yet they are from Windsor Forest. So much of Tennyson's description has this same sort of excellence—which does not carry him very much further than Windsor Forest carries Pope! Consider even the lyrics in The Princess, always played by admirers of Tennyson as among their strongest cards: Blow, Bugle, Blow! is a very fine poem so long as it sticks to rendering the bugle, but in the last stanza Tennyson attempts to deepen its music by a moral note:

> O love, they [the echoes of the bugle] die in yon
> rich sky;
> They faint on hill or field or river:
> Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
> And grow forever and forever.
> Blow, bugle, blow! etc.

Is this kind of morality, of which Tennyson, and so many of his contemporaries—especially in America—were full, any less artificial than that of Pope? If Tennyson were really able to convince us that he had felt the reverberations of personality in connection with the sound of the bugle (as Wordsworth felt the strange diminishing wonder of life in connection with the countryside of his childhood), we should accept them as an integral part of the poem; but he is not. As for Come down, O maid, from yonder mountain height, it is as sheer a piece of virtuosity as anything in Pope: "the firths of ice That huddling slant in furrow-cloven falls" are as little a part of the flesh and blood of The Princess as the freezing Tanais is of the Dunciad; and the shorter poem in which they occur, which fixes so many vivid images, conveys no emotion which we recognize as authentically poetic. With Pope, who only pretends to be superlatively witty (in moral instruction as well as pleasantry), we are delighted to find him rising sometimes to the passion of poetry; in Tennyson, who pretends to the first distinction of amorous, moral and religious profundity, we are disappointed to get wit. Pope, in his most characteristic vein of eighteenth century irony, hit off at least one charming lyric:

> All hail, once pleasing, once inspiring shade!
> Scene of my youthful loves and happier hours!
> Where the kind Muses met me as I stray'd,
> And gently press'd my hand, and said, "Be ours!—
> Take all thou e'er shalt have, a constant Muse:
> At Court thou may'st be liked, but nothing gain:
> Stock thou may'st buy and sell, but always lose,
> And love the brightest eyes, but love in vain."

* Pope: The Leslie Stephen Lecture for 1925, by Lytton Strachey. Cambridge: The University Press. 31 pages.

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Do we not accept the music and the feeling of this precisely because the poet has not tried to write in the least in the vein of Milton on his blindness? And do we not reject much of Tennyson—and of his contemporaries—because we suspect them of overstating in some way the dignity of their emotions?

III

But it would, of course, be unfair to Tennyson to leave him at this. I have said that Come down, O maid, from yonder mountain height conveys no authentically poetic emotion. What it does convey is the satisfaction in smooth English lawns and rich "immemorial" trees which, as Mr. Harold Nicolson has pointed out in his admirable biography of Tennyson, became the grave of the real poet. When Tennyson is troubled, as by his grief over the death of his friend, he writes in a very different strain. It is particularly interesting to see what he does with such a subject in that other celebrated lyric from The Princess, Tears, Idle Tears. Here he has an emotion as elusive and special as anything in the French symbolists—the strange poignancy, at once desperate and fresh, of some unexpected echo from the past. One knows from such a poem as

> Les faux beaux jours ont lui tout le jour, ma pauvre âme,
> Et les voici vibrer aux cuivres du couchant.

how Verlaine would have treated this theme. But, instead of resorting to the telescoped metaphors and the medley of images of symbolism, he reduces his difficult subject to a series of statements almost as lucid, precise, antithetical and scientifically accurate as anything in Pope.

> Fresh as the first beam glittering on a sail,
> That brings our friends up from the underworld,
> Sad as the last which reddens over one
> That sinks with all we love below the verge.

He finds an elaborate but actual simile which renders precisely what he wants to say:

> Ah, sad and strange as in dark summer dawns
> The earliest pipe of half-awaken'd birds
> To dying ears, when unto dying eyes
> The casement slowly grows a glimmering square.

In Tears, Idle Tears, he wrote perhaps not merely, as Mr. Nicolson suggests, one of the most successful of his own poems, but one of the best poems of his time. In this vein, he was nearer to the school of Verlaine than we ordinarily realize and his peculiar achievement was to have caught in a classic regularity exquisite moments of a temperament as fastidious and as sensitive as Verlaine's.

EDMUND WILSON.

Sunset

A beam of light was shaken out of the sky
On to the brimming tide, and there it lay
Palely tossing like a creature condemned to die
Who has loved the bright day.

"Ah, who are these that wing through the shadowy air?"
She cries, in agony. "Are they coming for me?"
The big waves croon to her: "Hush now! There—now—there!
There is nothing to see."

But her white arms lift to cover her shining head
And she presses close to the waves to make herself small . . .
On their listless knees the beam of light lies dead,
And the birds of shadow fall.

1919. KATHERINE MANSFIELD.

The Plot and the Picture

TWO newspaper items, next to each other, illuminate the peculiar status of the movie as it is today. First, Miss Fannie Hurst wins a prize of $50,000 for a story to run serially in Liberty and to be filmed by Famous Players; second, Irving Cummings, a director of growing prominence, announces that by laying down fourteen points, or qualities, which a movie must have, failures will be almost eliminated and more pictures that appeal to the audience will be turned out.

The first of these items indicates that the movie is still in its boom period, a conclusion that the ignorance and daring of many producers will substantiate. The second indicates that it is already in the stage of scientific management, working somewhat analytically, studying its own methods and its audiences; and this conclusion, too, can be reinforced by the methods of teaching and of study practiced by the larger producers. The two items, of course, play into each other's hands; the assumption is legitimate that Miss Hurst's enormously costly plot will contain "a majority of the following dramatic ingredients: ambition, conflict, conspiracy, devotion, eternal triangle, greed, intrigue, love, mother love, the quadrangle, retribution, reconciliation, sacrifice, feminine appeal." (It may be an accident that all but the last of these are given in alphabetical order. How is feminine appeal a dramatic ingredient?)

The first thing to note is that the fourteen ingredients might as well be set down for a story or a play; and this implies the whole falseness of the position because it is based on the belief that the goodness of a movie is to be measured by the standards of narrative or of drama. Or, observing the ingredients negatively, there is no mention of composition, of the plastic value of the picture, of the photography, of pace in the action depicted, of rhythm or the relation of part to part and to the whole; in the jumble of motives (ambition, greed) and methods (conflict, intrigue) there is no mention of the part the camera is to play. Everything which you can call the technique and the art of the picture is omitted. First assumption: that the technique and art are already so mastered by the directors that they may be taken for granted. Assumption disallowed; both are yet to make themselves felt as essentials. Second assumption: neither the audiences nor the directors (or producers) care for the technique or art of the picture. That merits consideration.

As qualities in themselves the audiences do not care for technical mastery and artistic creation in the movies. (By art I do not mean tragic endings or artistic settings or highbrow themes; I mean only such a simple thing as the reasonable relation between the content and the form, or the mere fulfilment of obligations to the intelligence.) But as qualities which make looking at and following a picture more agreeable, the audiences do care for them, even if they cannot name them. The audience wants a good story well told, and in this respect it is in the tradition of Homer's audiences; the movie is, just now, the local story-teller, the bard, and at moments the court jester. The good story may be found in the fourteen points; but the good movie will be judged by the further requirement that the story be well told. And to be well told in the movies, it must be told with the technique of the movie, not of the written story or the play; no matter where the story is found, it must be created again for the movies, and this process of creating, if powerfully and intelligently done, will insist upon certain

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forms, certain relations, which you can call the artistic elements. Recognized or unrecognized, these are the elements which make a picture good, and which, in my opinion, also make a good picture. To put it otherwise, a picture can be an artistic success without irritating the nickel and dime patrons.

At present an enormous amount of energy and of money goes into plot-buying; and desperate producers will snatch at any plot, if it contains the merest fragment of novelty, building around that novelty a structure of all the elements of hokum. Recently I saw a not new picture called The Crowded Hour which is a perfect illustration of this. The novelty was the scene in which a girl, most improbably caught in a dugout near the front lines, gains control of the telephone and has the choice, knowing that the line may be cut in a second, of phoning a message which will save her lover, or phoning one which will save a battalion. This case of conscience is old; but the front-line situation was new and justified the producers in buying the story. The physical necessity of making a full-length feature picture was met by the introduction of some of the most appalling hokum, as well as some of the best genre and war scenes I have observed; the whole picture was nevertheless fairly dreadful, because it was filled up, and not developed in accordance with any logic or conception of form, and because of a mediocre and imitative technique.

One becomes so irritated by this emphasis on the non-movie elements (the eternal triangle, and feminine appeal) that one is tempted to say, Give us plotless movies; but the look of blank horror which comes over a producer's face when you suggest it does not encourage explanation. I hold to the movie as a story-teller; but I believe that it is not the story, but the movie-method of telling it, that makes the movie great. The Relief of Lucknow is a classic example of what the movie can do (I have never seen it in the pictures, however); and any last-minute rescue is bound to be good movie material. It does not matter why the rescue is taking place; what matters is the tension of the last minute, the pace at which the rescue is performed. Mr. Griffith knows this and has varied the theme (usually with a father or lover holding a loaded pistol at the breast of the girl, in case the rescuers fail—a likely thing!). He also knows that pursuit is a good movie element (better than most of the fourteen) and has used it from the ride of the Klansmen to the pursuit of a vegetable cart. Action in general is the universal element of the pictures, but you would hardly know it from some of the pictures where either activity or acting, both of them weaker, are substituted for action.

To every suggestion about the movies, and especially to the suggestion that plot is not as important as it seems, the answer is made that the people crave novelty. Well, they are not getting it, to any notable degree. It is really the director's function to elaborate novel *situations* in the treatment of his plots, novel developments. With these fresh interests he can make a glorious picture out of Jack and Jill; without them he has made a stupid one out of The Ten Commandments.

About once every three weeks most movie patrons who are at all critical have the feeling that the movies are gone stale. Nearly every Monday you read reviews of movies in which "the old situation" is a regular phrase. It was a defect not noticed by the Athenians, who were, on good authority, as eager for a new thing as we are. The old situation, any old situation, is good if the treatment is fresh, intelligent, and powerful. Actually the movie is incredibly fertile because its own resources everlastingly suggest novelty of treatment; and the movie is being made sterile to a degree because the emphasis is being put upon the plot, and not upon the treatment by which the plot is realized. And that suggests one further comment upon the first of the news items. Miss Hurst's story was written to be serialized and to be filmed; it must have been molded at least in part to the exigencies of the movie, and the effect of the double intention of the author will be interesting to watch. It is already a common thing for an author to announce to a movie producer that he is going to write a series of stories for a magazine, and to suggest that, under contract, he will write them to fit a particular star. Our common literature is already affected by the movie and it is becoming a way of saying that a story is artistic or highbrow to say that it is not good picture material. But I fancy that when the movies begin to interest the uncommon writers, and vice versa, we shall have something more to talk about.

GILBERT SELDES.

Indiana Love

April 1.

Office-boy—There's a lady to see you. She says she's come all the way from Indiana on purpose just to see you. Are you going to see her?

Publisher—Oh hell. All right, show her in.

Lady—My name's Loretta Whistle. I have brought with me the manuscript of a book, which I have been writing for two—three—no, two years. It's about a love-affair, this man, this hero of mine, has in a small middle-western town. I read some parts of it to our Shakespeare club, and they said . . . .

April 3.

Publisher—Well, have you read this The Wooing of Timothy Bean yet?

Reader—Yes. It's pretty good. Nothing new of course. But quite plausible, quite realistic. I'd take a chance on it.

Publisher—You would? Well that's about my feeling. Yes, that's just about the extent of my own feeling. After all, our list is small this year and could stand a few extra titles.

Reader—So, you've read it? In a way it's gripping. That chapter at the altar. Quite gripping. Yes, almost gripping.

Publisher—Gripping. . . . Well, well. That's good. No, I didn't read it all, but I got an idea. I guess you're right after all. I agree with you. Here goes.

April 5.

Publisher—Sign right here, Miss Whistle. We're proud to have you on our list. It's a fine piece of work.

Miss Whistle—I'm delighted to be with you. Such a young firm too. The young men always have the best judgment. Now I'll want a copy of course to send to my mother, and one for each of my small nieces, and half a dozen to members of the club like Mrs. Fraser and Mrs. Hurmeyer—Mrs. Hurmeyer Junior that is. And another copy for . . . .

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April 8.

Partner—What title are you going to give this book of Whistle's? I'm not crazy about it anyway.

Publisher—What's the matter with The Wooing of Timothy Bean? That's a good title. And you're wrong anyway. It ought to sell like hot cakes.

Partner—Now if it was The Loves of Bean, maybe, or something like Indiana Love . . . .

Publisher—That's too crude; that's too much like a movie.

Partner—What's the matter with the movies? Now listen to me a minute . . . .

April 10.

Publisher—Miss Whistle, we've decided that a wonderful title for your book would be Indiana Love. It would also be very interesting to the moving picture people . . . .

Miss Whistle—How awful! How common! I won't hear of it for a moment! I was trying to write literature, not movies. Do you think all my Indiana women friends would stand for it? Indiana Love! The idea!

April 15.

Publisher—The wife's just crazy about that Whistle book. She says every woman she knows will want to read it. She's a woman, she ought to know. I tell you this is a woman's book.

Partner—All right. Then we ought to keep the old title. It's more respectable.

April 18.

Miss Whistle—I think perhaps you're right about Indiana Love. And it would be nice to get a lot of money from those movie people. But I like my own title.

Publisher—No, Miss Whistle, we'll keep your own title. It would be the most advisable one. We'll defer to your own wishes in the matter.

Miss Whistle—Just as you say. Of course I like my own title best.—I've got to stay here another week. Can you advance me two hundred dollars?

May 18.

Publisher—Well, did she read it?

Friend—Yes, she liked it fine. Says it's one of the best books she's ever read. And she's read lots.

Publisher—Splendid. I think we ought to clean up on it.

September 10.

Partner—About time we began to do something with Timothy Bean. It's all set up.

Publisher—I'll think over the advance work.

September 13.

Publisher—But the most striking novel of all in our lists is The Wooing of Timothy Bean. A gripping story of life in Indiana, not just small town life, but deeper, more romantic you know, and real people, and heartfelt. It's going to create a sensation.

Critic—Send it along. I'll look it over.

Waiter—Your check, sir.

Publisher—This is on me.

September 18.

Publisher (dictating)—The Wooing of Timothy Bean is far and away the best novel I have ever published. I hope that you will review it yourself. It combines rich humor with spiritual fervor, reality with fantasy, strikes a new note in the study of the heart of the West, and—Now how did that last sentence begin?

September 20.

Publisher—These are the three alternative jackets.

Miss Whistle—I like this one best with the silhouette of them kissing on it.

September 30.

Underling—Taker and Baylor have ordered two hundred Timothy Bean's.

Publisher—Great. Let's print another two thousand.

October 1.

Publisher—I have every expectation that The Wooing of Timothy Bean will be a best seller. But I don't care. It's a work of literature, and that's what I'm looking for.

Rival—I'll watch for it. Now my own big headliner is called With a Lawnmower in Heaven . . . .

October 20.

Partner—A flop. A thousand dollar flop. Look at the reviews. Look at the sales. Lucky if we sell eighteen hundred.

Publisher—I never did have much confidence in that Timothy Bean book. It was too badly written. I wonder what made me take it.

November 1.

Critic—Why do you publish such stuff? Well-meant rubbish. Middle-west drivel of the kindliest futility.

Publisher—I think you are right. But I like to help those young writers along.

Waiter—Your check, sir.

Publisher—Let's split this.

December 1.

Publisher—I value your judgment, dear, of course, but remember your reaction to that Miss Whistle's book. And look what happened.

Wife—Which? That Indiana Love—no, that wasn't the name. Did I read it? What was it about?

Publisher—I don't exactly remember, but we lost a lot of money on it.

January 1.

Office-boy—There's a young lady to see you. She says she's come all the way from Virginia City on purpose just to see you. She's got a manuscript with her called Minnesota Marriage. Are you going to see her?

Publisher—Tell her I've gone out for a long, long walk.

ROBERT LITTELL.

Toward a Romantic Revival

We too, we too descending once again
The hills of our own land, we too have heard
Far off—Ah que ce cor a longue haleine—
The horn of Roland in the passages of Spain,
The first, the second blast, the failing third,
And with the third turned back and climbed once more
The steep road southward, and heard faint the sound
Of swords, of horses, the disastrous war,
And crossed the dark defile at last, and found
At Ronçevaux, upon the darkening plain
The dead against the dead and on the silent ground
The silent slain.

ARCHIBALD MACLEISH.

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CORRESPONDENCE

Advertising Waste

SIR: Mr. Stuart Chase has nobly shied a great fat boulder through the front window of the house wherein the "advertising game" holds forth and let us hope that by now he is at least around the corner and safe in some bomb-proof shelter. Attacking this, among the most sacred of our institutions, is no enterprise for a thin-skinned person. Inasmuch as so many things will be hurled in his direction with patriotic enthusiasm by those who will feel the call to protect their own economic homes and firesides, perhaps he won't mind a comparatively soft brickbat tossed feebly by a sincere well-wisher.

I do not know whether it was with intent that he overlooked the relation of the main side-issue, the publishing business, to the parent stem—but it seems to me it ought not to be overlooked in any consideration of the wastes and worth of advertising. Mr. Bok's figures, which he uses, show that of the annual American advertising outlay of $1,284,000,000 the cost of newspaper and other periodical advertising is $847,000,000, or slightly more than two-thirds of the whole. Even if one discounts this by, say, 25 percent to cover solicitation costs and agency takings spent in the preparation of copy, etc.—the expenditure lying purely and entirely within the realm of the advertising trade—it remains true that more than half the huge total of American advertising expenditure goes to support periodical publications, approximately three-fourths of this going to the daily newspapers.

I am not undertaking to defend the newspapers as they exist or to attempt to say whether our peerless civilization would be better or worse off without them, but it ought to be admitted in any discussion of advertising wastes that without advertising, the newspapers—in numbers, in bulk and in circulation—would be but fractional shadows of their present selves. We'd have no million circulations, we'd have no one-cent or two-cent papers, we'd have no 64-page issues, no joinals, no picture-tabloids and—let this thought sober you—no Saturday Evening Post. Such as we would have would need to sell for their cost of production as a minimum and they would certainly bulk far less and be far more restricted in their sale, whatever we may hope as to their quality in those circumstances. Not merely the price would restrict circulation, but, because the profit in sight would be so much smaller, we should have none of the huge pressure of promotional effort which causes today's newspapers to stuff the rural mail-boxes and litter the subways.

I think Mr. Chase is less than fair to the "advertising game" in another particular. Impudent as it may be to say it in view of the authority cited I do not believe the doctrine that: "Meanwhile the purchasing power of the country does not materially vary. There are just so many dollars to be spent. Advertising creates no new dollars." I think all of this is demonstrably false.

"Purchasing power" must be a highly theoretical quantity. Certainly the gross volume of transactions is subject to peaks and slumps, varying with the effective demand. There is a great economic difference between the primitively-minded individual who will work only so long as is necessary to provide food for the day or the week as the case may be and the "civilized" workingman. I don't see how you can avoid giving advertising part of the credit for the happy state of society marked by wants expanding always faster than the progress of industry in reducing the labor necessary to live.

Again, if advertising performs any service of value—and it seems to be admitted that it does—to permit it to perform this service implies endless repetition and therefore endless "waste." No good thing or bad thing is sold at one selling; no idea ever percolates generally except by constant hammering.

But certainly it is true that there is scarcely any advertising that doesn't contain an element of either outright lying or misrepresentation in some form. Many of our "true romances of modern business" are charming pieces of fiction, but not to be compared in inventiveness with the fairy tales that appear on the car cards and in the advertising pages and on the cartons and billboards. Just the other day I saw the first announcement of a brand-new candy bar that was already "America's Favorite Confection."

It is all, however, only a part of the bigger "game" of selling. There are none of its tricks, whether of plain or fancy lying or appeals to snobbishness or cupidity or constant nagging or other forms of hypnotic compulsion, that are not borrowed from the old wheedling, bullying art of the bazaars. I am inclined to think the paper-and-ink salesman is far less offensive and probably on the whole economically more efficient than his brother in flesh and blood. Yet there remain at least ten times too many venders of all kinds of commodities, all with their regiments of salesmen and acres of store space to maintain.

The true name of the Old Man of the Sea is Salesmanship—or should it be Competition?—but I don't know what can be done about it short of turning the Sherman law inside out and granting exclusive selling monopolies in all lines of trade. But maybe that, too, would have its disadvantages.

New York, N. Y. HERBERT GASTON.

"Just Like Mother"

SIR: In your issue of August 19, Mr. George Soule ends his interesting article, Will the Farmers Pay? with two questions, one of which is: "As to the long run, is it on the cards that we, like Great Britain, shall become a preëminently manufacturing nation, and shall depend on foreign sources for our food supply?"

If the late Secretary Wallace of Agriculture is to be taken as an authority, it is "on the cards," all right. Speaking before a body of Chicago business men a short while before his death, Secretary Wallace said, in substance, this:

"Two hundred years ago England found herself facing the same problems that confront us today. She solved her problems by sacrificing agriculture to industry and thus became the leading nation of the world." This sacrificing of the farmers to the Moloch of Imperialism, Wallace styled the "Wisdom of England."

It was "some" advice to come from one supposedly representing the farmers, but, however that may be, the advice is undoubtedly being acted upon both by the Visible and Invisible government of the United States. I have been close to farmers and farmer organizations in the states of North Dakota, Texas, Alabama, Oklahoma, Louisiana and Arkansas during the past five years, and everywhere I find the farmers who *farm the farms* worse off economically and socially than ever before in my experience, and I lived through the terrible panic of 1893-96, when millions of farmers "went on the public road," as we put it when we lost everything.

In those days, though, the farmers fought back like wildcats and, for a time, had "Wall Street" on the defensive. But today it is not so. Now they seem everywhere to be crushed and dispirited. Beaten politically and economically, they are desperate but hopeless, for men in their condition have really but one hope—Social Revolution—and the American farmer, though he is practically expropriated, still worships "private property" too much to contemplate the junking of the old order of things without fear of the consequences, this even though he has today nothing but his rent bills and mortgages to lose.

In this state of mind, the "Wisdom of England" will get him, and is getting him. He is fast being tenantized and proletarianized. Soon, not only shall we depend on foreign sources for our food supply, but for troops as well, for Imperialism cannot exist without setting nations and races at each other's throats. Its very life depends on subjugation, economic, social, political, intellectual and spiritual. It is merely his misfortune that the American farmer happens to be the first victim laid on the altars of the American Empire. But he need not mourn. Tomorrow millions of American industrial workers will be sent to keep him company in his misery, for this is always and inevitably what the "Wisdom of England" leads to. We are to be "just like Mother" if the powers that now rule us have their way with us much longer—an Empire where millions toil and rot for the glorification of a handful of Usurers. To look to capitalists for relief is to expect Beelzebub to cast out devils. Every day now Edward Bellamy's prophesy is being proved true to the letter. "No ruling class in history has ever learned anything from its predecessors," he said, "and the American capitalist class will prove no exception to that rule." It has not. It is already far on the road to Rome and ruin. Plutocracy or the People must perish, and the People can take their choice. It is up to them.

Mena, Ark. COVINGTON HALL.

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Mexico and International Law

SIR: The delicate situation created by the extra-official press duel, without precedent in the history of diplomacy, between the President of Mexico and the American Secretary of State, evidences how useless an international court of justice, unless backed by compulsory universal jurisdiction, or a permanent court of arbitration, becomes when a justiciable question turns into a political, and hence, a non-justiciable dispute. For the partial failure of the Mexican government to live up to its international obligations, viz., payment of its foreign debts, etc., is a justiciable question, and it has led to the place where a cabinet officer, with the advice of his government, has made an unofficial public statement (practically an ultimatum) of such a nature and containing such grave charges as to vitally affect the constitutional order and sovereignty of a foreign country.

On the other hand, the Mexican government correctly claims it is not liable at international law for outrages against foreigners. The American government, in connection with outrages against Chinese in Denver, Colo., in 1880, and in Rock Springs, Wyo., in 1885, refused to admit that "the United States was in any wise liable at international law" for the outrages (Moore, VI, 820-2), and in agreeing to pay an indemnity to the Chinese government the Secretary of State added that this payment was made, however, "in a spirit of pure generosity," and was "in no wise to be held as a precedent."

The Mexican government may be bound by the law of nations to extend its protective federal jurisdiction to foreigners, but, then, like the American government, it is guilty of "the crassest sort of negligence to provide the proper legal machinery for carrying its treaty or international obligations into effect." (See Messages of Presidents McKinley, Roosevelt, Taft, Wilson, and Harding—in connection with the unpunished killing of three Mexicans at Herrin, Ill.—renewing President Harrison's recommendation of December 9, 1891, to "make offenses against the treaty rights of foreigners domiciled in the United States cognizable in the federal courts.")

There is no difference between Mexico and the United States which cannot be amicably settled through the regular channels. Give Mexico a chance to heal her glorious wounds in the cause of liberty and democracy. Mexico asks no money, no relief expeditions, only a chance, a fair chance, to work out her own salvation, to continue her task of reconstruction.

A. M. GARCIA.

Rochester, N. Y.

The Tragedy of Waste

SIR: In his articles on The Tragedy of Waste Mr. Chase displays much skill in setting forth statistics in an interesting manner.

But what has he proved?

He certainly has offered no proof to sustain the dictum that runs through his articles: that if the various kinds of waste were eliminated a demonstrably large amount of man-power would go back to "useful" labor.

I should like to know on what he bases this assertion. I have an old and pronounced mistrust of every person who essays a prediction of what will happen or would have happened in any given case. What useful labor would it go to, and why would it be "going back" to useful labor, since it is not at all certain that the man-power employed in what he calls waste ever did any useful labor—to use his own words?

But Mr. Chase has not even proved that everything he calls waste is in fact waste. Luxuries? Which luxuries? The luxuries of fifty years ago? The luxuries of yesterday are the necessities of today, and those of today will be necessities of tomorrow.

Does not Mr. Chase leave out of consideration two very important factors: first, that waste is a perfectly natural product (all natural phenomena, all nature, produces waste, functionally); second, that in relation to human individuals, as well as human society, waste is also relative.

Utility is not the only measure of value; if it were adhered to as a standard by a "functional society" (from which the Lord deliver us) we might be conceivably much richer in the measure of usefulness but how much poorer in every other way! The saving of waste would have to be compensated by some loss somewhere else.

EDWARD D. TITTMAN.

El Paso, Texas.

Superstition and Locale

SIR: Will you kindly publish this letter in answer to Mr. Kent's article concerning Dayton, Tenn., published in the New Republic issue of July 29?

His editorial begins: "What's the sense of writing about the trial? The trial, itself, has been a trivial thing full of humbuggery and hypocrisy, conducted by publicity-seeking lawyers, sensation-hungry correspondents, a bewildered judge, a befuddled jury, a pop-eyed crowd." This answer is in part true, and in part grossly false: his term "sensation-hungry correspondents" is no doubt true, judging from the bunk of publicity given. "Being a trivial thing full of humbuggery and hypocrisy . . . a bewildered judge, a befuddled jury, a pop-eyed crowd" is false in its entirety. For any lawyer of average commonsense, even though he may be in favor of evolution, will commend the judge and jury for the conduct of the trial of the case.

Relative to the religious denominations in and around Dayton (Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian, and Holy-Rollers; no Catholics or Episcopalians): I am not in sympathy with the Holy-Rollers, but will use them for a comparison of superstition with the Catholics of the cities. My opinion is that there is no more superstition in Holy-Rollerism than Catholicism. The Holy-Rollers may jump up and down, and boil over with their superstition, but the Catholics of the cities kneel before supposed-to-be Saints, and cross their breasts a few times in their religious service. Both are symbolic. I am not familiar with the town and country around Dayton, but judging from knowledge of other small towns and rural districts, I venture to say that no doubt the majority of the Holy-Rollers came from Nashville, or probably some Eastern city, if there were as many there as Mr. Kent states.

I judge from his article that he feels that superstition exists only in small towns and rural districts. If this is his judgment, it is weak and false. The Eastern cities are full of superstition, churches of different denominations—such as the spiritualistic—using their mediums for communication with the dead; and in some cities these sects draw immense throngs of the supposedly better class.

Think seriously, Mr. Kent, before making erroneous and false charges against the small towns and rural districts.

PAUL MAYNARD.

Greenville, S. C.

A "Magna Charta" of Peace

SIR: Death is inevitable, yet medical science through unparalleled devotion has placed the entire world in its debt by greatly lengthening the average of human life and the abolishing of many epidemics. Peace science owes a similar debt to humanity so that by unswerving devotion to its ideals it will be able to lengthen life between nations and to prevent wars and rumors of wars. I give below the clauses of a magna charta of peace for the world:

1. The definite pledge of the United States to the cause of peace by the establishment of a bureau or department of peace or conciliation with equal rank and authority to the General Staff of the Army and the General Board of the Navy.—Dr. David Starr Jordan.
2. A song of peace for the world.
3. A creed of peace and good-will for the children of all nations.
4. A "peace ballot stamp," (Ex-Postmaster General Hitchcock) to give every one the option of voting for peace with every stamp purchased.
5. A world memorial day—May 30.
6. To use the press of the world for peace.
7. International mind alcoves for libraries.
8. A graphic international commodity exchange map, illustrating the interdependence of nations.
9. An international tariff commission which will exert a strong influence against excessive tariffs.
10. An international organization of university presidents.
11. A world university to train young men and women for world service.
12. The stories of the nations to be written for school children by groups of broad-minded nationals.
13. To use the movies of the nations for world peace.
14. A world peace clearing house to coördinate peace efforts everywhere.

St. Paul, Minn. J. W. HAMILTON.

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Ibsen Today

The Modern Ibsen, by Hermann Weigand. New York: Henry Holt and Company. 416 pages. $3.75.

CRITICISM is one of the dangerous trades; and on the whole the perils gather chiefly about the feet of those who in the beaten track seek safety first. Nothing could have seemed safer than in the name of tradition to curse the Preraphaelites, the Impressionists, Whistler, Wagner, Strauss, Ibsen and Maeterlinck; but those who blasphemed now do well to call upon the rocks to fall and bury them. The case of Ibsen in England is peculiarly in point because there the record has been quite perfectly preserved. Ibsen came to England after his triumph on the continent from Stockholm to Vienna had given a full forecast of his historic rôle as the re-creator of the modern drama in the name of realism. In spite of this, the critics in their defense of the right of the English theatre-going public, like the church-going public, to have what they were used to and liked on their stage as at their altar, were blind to all signs of the times. In 1893 when the daily, weekly and Sunday press were proclaiming that Ibsen was "dead as a door nail," Mr. William Archer had the happy inspiration to build in The Fortnightly Review a mausoleum to Ibsen out of the stones which had been hurled at him. It is a priceless edifice. Among the larger fragments of the fabric are this from the Standard on Rosmersholm: "Those portions of the play which are comprehensible are utterly preposterous. Ibsen is neither dramatist, poet, philosopher, moralist, teacher, reformer, nothing but a compiler of disagreeable eccentricities." And this from Mr. Robert Buchanan in the Illustrated London News: "For sheer unadulterated stupidity, for inherent meanness and vulgarity, for pretentious triviality . . . no Bostonian novel or London penny novelette has surpassed Hedda Gabler." And this from the Licensed Victuallers' Gazette: "If Herr Ibsen were well smothered in mud with every copy of his plays the world would be the better for it." Among the smaller stones are: "Abominable, disgusting, bestial, fetid, loathsome, putrid, crapulous, offensive, scandalous, repulsive, revolting, blasphemous, abhorrent, degrading, unwholesome, sordid, foul, filthy, malodorous, noisome, dull, dreary, dirty, dismal and dead." Of the hurlers of these epithets Robert Buchanan in particular makes us regret that his talents were exhausted before the patriotic opportunities of the War; and Clement Scott, that he died before the term Bolshevist was current. At worst he can call Ibsen only a "crazy fanatic," "a determined Socialist."

Among the charges most persistently brought against Ibsen were dullness, nastiness, provinciality, and incomprehensibility. All four have fallen to the ground in the final court of public opinion. As to the last, as with Wagner and Strauss, Browning and Meredith, it is difficult for us to recall the time when it had meaning. No one who reads or sees Ibsen today does so with Mr. Scott's sensations which he described as those of "a man who witnessed a play written, rehearsed and acted by lunatics." Comment and interpretation are so generally abroad in regard to his plays that everyone has an idea of what they mean sufficient to dispose of any acute feeling of intellectual discomfort. But here is another danger. In the acceptance of a received interpretation, a critical stereotype, we are in danger of missing the finer shades of significance with which Ibsen meant to endow his characters and situations. "First impressions," says Mr. Weigand, "in dealing with so complicated a matter as Ibsen's plays, almost always come in for revision, just as in listening to strange harmonies and rhythms of unfamiliar music." Ibsen has won on the European stage a victory, for the completeness of which we must go back to Shakespeare. Now, like Shakespeare, he has become a proper subject of intensive criticism.

This is the task which Mr. Weigand has set himself in regard to the prose dramas. He has subjected them to minute textual analysis and has compared them with the earlier drafts, made available in the volume From Ibsen's Workshop in William Archer's edition. He has sought external evidence as to Ibsen's state of mind from his letters contemporary with the plays. On the whole this process is justified. Ibsen emerges from Mr. Weigand's book, a greater and more enthralling figure, both as artist and as man. The fruits of his research may be tested by the instances of a few of the more familiar characters. In A Doll's House, Mr. Weigand shows how Ibsen changed Nora from a tragic figure in the first draft to a lighter, less intelligent and less responsible character, so that her dream of a "miracle" by which Torwald will take her guilt upon himself becomes part of the flimsy romantic tissue of her thought; and her exit with that slam of the door behind her, which Bernard Shaw pronounced solemnly to be "more momentous than the cannon of Waterloo or Sedan because when she comes back she will not be the old Nora," is merely a gesture of the tragic comedian which she is. She will come back, and she will be the old Nora, but she will be in a new position. She has learned her power.

In Hedda Gabler Mr. Weigand examines the interesting transformation of Tesman's character from first draft to finished play. At first conceived as "homely in appearance, but honorable, and a gifted man of science," he becomes in a second draft an obvious accomplice in the destruction of Lövborg's manuscript, to emerge finally as a dull, selfish pedant whose complicity in that deed, subtly indicated by his subsequent behavior, is mental rather than physical. Mr. Weigand shows his penetration in his analysis of Rosmersholm; his account of what had happened, of what each character knew and what view each took of what had happened, and the bearing of this knowledge on their action is quite convincing. He puts his finger on the weak spot in the construction of the play—"the grafting of a philosophical problem upon the psychological drama."

Mr. Weigand has no difficulty in showing that Ibsen's text is rich in background thought and second intention. The changes from his first drafts are usually in the direction of greater subtlety and complexity of character. In the earlier plays they usually veer from tragedy toward comedy. Indeed, Mr. Weigand finds in Professor Rubek's comment on his portrait busts in When We Dead Awaken a bit of self-revelation of Ibsen's own. "There is something equivocal, something cryptic," he says, "lurking in and behind these busts—a secret something, that the people themselves cannot see. . . . I alone can see it. And it amuses me unspeakably." Here is the comic genius making dupes of his public as well as of his characters. One famous case of deception was Gregers Werle, in The Wild Duck, whose utterances were so like Brand's that it was hard to realize that Ibsen was laughing at him. Gregers was soon discovered, but Alfred Allmers in Little Eyolf remains for most readers clothed in the impeccable elevation and purity of his sentiments. Not for Bernard Shaw, it may be remarked, who has anticipated Mr. Weigand in detecting the egotist, the coward, and the sensualist beneath the noble idealism of his speech. As Mr. Weigand says: "What complicates matters is the fact that

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in numerous instances Ibsen seemed to have chosen Allmers for the mouthpiece of his own ideas and feelings." The same is true of Dr. Stockmann in An Enemy of the People. Thus Ibsen is shown to carry comedy beyond the dupery of his characters and of his audience, to the supreme point of recognizing and exposing his own illusions. The full range of his genius is before us, from Brand to Peer Gynt.

There is a temptation offered by every dramatist to seek for his personal experience and attitude behind the objectivity of his form. How many gallant attempts have been made to see in Shakespeare's plays the seduced lad, the horseboy, the lawyer's clerk, the traveler to Italy, the aristocratic scorner of the mob, the gentlemanly sceptic. If such pursuits lead to closer, more fascinated study of the dramatist they may be welcomed, and in any case they are inevitable. Modern morality has evolved a literary form which may be defined as the ordeal, as distinct as the mediæval débat—The Ordeal of Richard Feverel, The Ordeal of Mark Twain. It is tempting to see in the prose dramas, with their repeated examples of idealism defeated by public stupidity and selfishness, betrayed by egotism, extravagance and weakness of will, the record of the Ordeal of Hendrik Ibsen. Particularly The Master Builder, following as it does on the episode of Ibsen's brief association with Emilie Bardach, an eighteen year old Viennese girl whom he met at Gossensass in 1889, seems in its symbolism to embody Ibsen's career. All this is admittedly dangerous ground, and Mr. Weigand advances on it with reserve. It is certain, however, from Ibsen's letters that he made use of his personal psychology in drawing characters for his plays. It is possible to feel that they contain a story of aspiration and attainment and disillusionment on as grand a scale as is permitted to the dweller in the nineteenth century. This is to be inferred from Mr. Weigand's critique, read into, rather than out of it. But as he himself points out, Ibsen counts largely upon "the creative response of his reader to complete what he finds suggested by the poet only in outline." Mr. Weigand's criticism possesses the same stimulating quality.

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT.

Growth of Unionism

The Growth of American Trade Unions 1880-1923, by Leo Wolman. New York: National Bureau of Economic Research. 170 pages. $3.00.

CONFRONTED with a phenomenon demanding his attention, the average American is supposed invariably to ask, "How big is it?," to be impressed if you can tell him the measurements to the last inch or cubic centimetre, and to experience a peculiar thrill if you can add the magical phrase "largest in the world." If the most rabid open shop employer could be informed, in big black type, that the United States possessed the biggest trade union membership of any country, it is doubtful whether even he could refrain from boasting about it. But the day of rotarianism applied to unions has not yet come. Even in 1920, our peak year, we ranked after Germany and Great Britain. Furthermore, exact statistical records are a fairly recent innovation in the labor movement. Certain refinements, such as the monthly fluctuations in membership and the geographical distribution, are not yet ascertainable. But the main questions: how big is the trade union movement in America? how has it grown? how is it distributed among our industries? what percentage of each industry is organized, and how has that percentage changed over a decade? what was the effect of the War? of business cycles? how many women are organized?—the answers to these and to other inquiries which may arise in connection with separate unions, have been compiled from existing published sources, brought up to date, and are now available in a single compact and readable volume. The book is not only a mine of statistical information; it tells the dramatic story of a great social development.

In the period between 1897—a convenient landmark after the depression of the nineties—and the outbreak of the War, organization proceeded chiefly among the skilled workmen of the railroading, building and printing industries, and among the coal miners. These industries were in 1910 respectively 23, 16, 34 and 35 percent organized. "During almost the whole of this period," says Dr. Wolman, "nearly half the total membership was to be found in the transportation and building groups, while the rest was scattered over the entire range of industries and services." Progress was gradual but steady.

Between 1915 and 1920, the years of war-time prosperity, something happened which was comparable only to the great wave of organization among the unskilled workers in 1885 under the Knights of Labor. The latter day increase was spread over a longer period and has proved more stable. Within five years 2,500,000 members were added, thus nearly doubling the 1914 membership. In this accretion the established unions in the industries just mentioned shared, but the most remarkable gains were made among the semi-skilled and unskilled, and in industries hitherto almost totally unorganized. The metal unions, including the railway shopmen, increased fourfold. The textile unions quintupled their membership, though that still left them only 15 percent unionized. Water transportation, meat packing and slaughtering, and clothing became highly organized industries.

With the exception of clothing, the unions which had made the spectacular gains lost, in the depression of 1920 to 1922, practically all that they had won, thus accounting for more than 60 percent of the million members lost by the movement as a whole. On the other hand the older unions, the brotherhoods, printers, building trades unions, and to a less extent the miners, retained a considerable percentage of their gains. Dr. Wolman explains these fluctuations: "Although the great rise from 1915 to 1920 and the severe decline in the next years was shared by all of the important groups of unions, there is no question that the unions claiming jurisdiction over industries most directly affected by the War felt the rise and fall most sharply. Almost three-fourths of the whole gain in membership after 1915 was made in industries that experienced large expansion during the War and that were subject to some form of public control." The decline is ascribed to the virtual closing down, after the Armistice, of certain industries in which unions had been active, e. g., ship-building; to heavy drop in employment in others; and to the unsuccessful strikes conducted by the railway shopmen, the water transportation unions, etc.

To calculate the extent to which organization has been carried, the total number eligible to unions must first be ascertained. Three estimates by as many different authorities, given in this book, show a discrepancy of several million in the total number of wage earners, due to different methods of classifying the returns of the Census of Occupations and to the inclusion of data from varying sources. Dr. Wolman's estimate places the total number of wage

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earners in round numbers at 25,000,000 for January, 1920, the date of the last Census of Occupations. Reckoning thus Dr. Wolman finds roughly 20 percent of the wage earners organized in 1920, compared to 10 percent in 1910. Eliminating the clerical workers, the percentage of union members among the manual labor group is 28, compared to 15 ten years ago.

The peak in organization was reached in 1920 by the water transport unions, with 85 percent of the industry controlled, though, as we have seen, for a very brief period. Next came steam railways, and clothing, both groups 57 percent organized; coal mines and printing, 50 percent. The building trade, supposed to be a stronghold of unionism, appears to have been only 25 percent organized. However, selected occupations within the building group show a much higher proportion. Could one allow for the various limitations upon membership of each and every union and make comparison only with "the residuum of organizable employes" the proportion would, Dr. Wolman explains, in all cases be higher.

The present volume belongs to a series of studies made under the auspices of the National Bureau of Economic Research, of which the ultimate purpose is to discover the effect of the business cycle upon the production and distribution of the national income. The depressing effect of slumps and panics, and the stimulating influence of prosperity on the growth of unions, are conclusively but incidentally demonstrated. The volume stands as a quantitative analysis of the history of American Labor, rather than as a contribution to the study of business cycles. However there is no telling in what channels it may prove useful. The material has been collected and arranged without reference to any fixed thesis. Because of its fullness and variety it is rich in suggestion. The tables on extent of organization, together with the detailed explanation of their construction, suggest, for instance, that the principles of craft unionism are extremely inadequate to cope with the American industrial problem; but the author has refrained from interpreting his material, save as an economist and statistician, thereby leaving the door open for future analysis and interpretation.

JEAN ATHERTON FLEXNER.

Contemporaries

James Branch Cabell, by Carl Van Doren. New York: Robert M. McBride and Company. $1.

Theodore Dreiser, by Burton Rascoe. New York: Robert M. McBride and Company. $1.

AN enterprise that promises to illume the course of our recent literature with lights which, though small, will be shining and significant, is inaugurated with Mr. Van Doren's monograph on the work of Cabell. Mr. Van Doren leads the charge in gallant style. He lends himself sympathetically and whole-heartedly to his author's sinuosities and idiosyncrasies; articulates his output into its "periods"—even if he cannot quite master the intricacies of the Cabellian chronology; presents a double-page map of the memorable and serviceable province of Poictesme; and, in general, does justice to one of the most original and fascinating talents now on our literary scene. Mr. Van Doren draws a rigorous line between "Cabell Minor" and "Cabell Major." But no hard-and-fast roster can satisfy everyone, and those readers who have been in the habit of regarding The Cream of the Jest as essentially the nub of Cabell's œuvre will wish that this piece had at least been placed on the dividing line rather than on the earlier side of it. However, each new work—and Cabell is magnificently (even if repetitiously) prolific—tends to alter the general perspective. Mr. Van Doren keeps his head through the shifting scene; deals understandingly with Mr. Cabell's ideas; and exhibits, in his own trim style, the more studied and ornamental style cultivated by his subject.

After Mr. Van Doren, suavis both in re and modo, comes Mr. Burton Rascoe, equally fortis in each. His volume is in good part an ardent, rather rough-and-tumble defense of Theodore Dreiser against certain staid supporters of social decorum. One notes an excess of pugnacity displayed toward Mr. Sherman and even toward Mr. Brownell, and wonders whether life is likely to become any less crass by reason of having its crassness emphasized. One also notes Mr. Rascoe's disposition to make Dreiser's portrayal of such activities as those of Chicago and Pittsburgh, during a time of industrial expansion, serve as a moral (or perhaps immoral) equivalent of war, as well as his tendency to make a great city exclusively a battlefield, and therefore to resent, from other writers in such a field, the intrusion of anything resembling the pipings of peace. On the other hand, his view of Theodore Dreiser as a "tragic optimist" who is "trembling with profound pity over the dismal contortions of life, but ever hopeful that somehow, some time, man's burdens will be lightened and his afflictions healed" should find acceptance—unless the supplementary statement that such "consummation, he sometimes believes, may be hastened if everyone took to heart the words of Voltaire, Robert Ingersoll, Ernst Haeckel, Krafft-Ebbing, T. H. Huxley, Herbert Spencer, Havelock Ellis and Carl Snyder" should suggest the tongue in the cheek. More certainly sincere is the further view of Dreiser as a generous, perplexed, uncouth romantic, led—or misled—by Balzac, and the almost inspirational declaration, made to finish with, that Dreiser "has that chaos in him which gives birth to dancing stars." In conclusion, I could wish for Mr. Rascoe, with all my admiration of his energy, a cultivation of the amenities; and I would add that one who is so admirably and energetically self-expressive might well avoid a certain top-heavy employment of quotation, Dreiserian and other.

HENRY B. FULLER.

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The Relic, by Eca de Queroz. Translated from the Portuguese by Aubrey F. G. Bell. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.

THIS novel, written in the last years of the nineteenth century by a man who, even before his death in 1900, was called the foremost novelist of modern Portugal, is in the mocking tradition of Heine and Voltaire. It is a lively satire upon ecclesiastical commercialism, built upon a legend as rakish as a mediæval fabliau.

The plot turns upon an incident of mistaken identity, in the broadest sense. Dom Raposo, a lusty young Bachelor of Lisbon, with a strong black beard and a mouth that waters perpetually for the sweets of love, is tied to the purse-strings of a pietistic maiden aunt. Sent to the Holy Land to fetch her a most powerful relic, he gathers a branch from a desert thorn-tree, which, he is assured by his learned traveling companion, is the authentic source of Our Lord's

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spiky crown. Back in Lisbon again, Raposo, at the crucial moment of presentation, brings forth a changeling relic—not the Crown of Thorns, but the nightdress which a lady in Alexandria gave him as a memento of her love. For this chance error, he is turned out of doors, to earn a scanty living by the sale of bogus relics, while priests inherit the fat fortune of Donna Patrocinio.

The story is told in the first person, in English so chaste and exquisitely clear that one wonders whether the style has been filtered at all in passing through the hands of the translator. The characters step out familiarly, and from the hero down to the most casual hotel porter they are amply alive. Not one of them, except the man Jesus as Raposo sees him in a dream, is actually admirable, and most of them are rogues. For his æsthetic appeal the author relies, not upon human conduct, but on landscapes and furnishings, and on the romantic flavor of antiquity. That vision, consuming nearly a third of the book, where Dom Raposo witnesses the drama of the Crucifixion and the brilliance of Zion in the days of the Pharisees, is a marvel of historical restoration. It recalls, in its richness of detail and its philosophical impudence, the picture of Hellenistic Alexandria which Anatole France has given us in Thais. Like Thais, The Relic stands securely in the long line of European masterpieces which are indebted to the Catholic Church for their existence. From a churchly standpoint, it is ribald and blasphemous in the extreme, as are the novels of Anatole France and the romances of Voltaire. Like these, its ingenuousness is equalled only by its sophistication, and like them it has doubtless attained the distinction of the papal Index. ROSE LEE.

Americans All

Firecrackers, by Carl Van Vechten. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.

Sycamore Bend, Population 1300, by Frazier Hunt. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.00.

Samuel Drummond, by Thomas Boyd. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.00

The Professor's House, by Willa Cather. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $2.00.

MR. VAN VECHTEN'S smartly irresponsible story is partly firecrackers, but mostly squibs, which, as any amateur of the Fourth of July will remember, are not quite the same thing, though a hopeful imitation. Here and there Firecrackers explodes, though by no means like a cannon cracker, but on the whole it emits a continuous, pleasant, sputtering hiss, with a little smoke, less flare, and no real noise at all. What the story is one could not exactly say, nor does it matter, nor does any of it seem to matter very much. Words such as "algid," "esurient," "mantic" and "tralatitiously" fail to sharpen the flavor of a brew of rather mild spices. Artfully curious characters poke their heads in for no particular reason, and exeunt, for reasons just as good. Some of the book is smart, some of it realistic, some of it fantastic, and a great deal of it pretty dreary. Spots that are meant to be bright strike one as tepidly, self-consciously, wearily playful; other spots, intended to be more naturalistic, add a passing accent of truth which is, by contrast, merely odd. Among a number of curiously colored paper dolls, the figure of Wintergreen Waterbury stands out with surprisingly graceful and absurd reality only to be destroyed at the end in a perverse fit of something like irritation. Altogether, a moderately readable example of the smart school at recess time.

Nothing could be further removed from Firecrackers than Mr. Hunt's Sycamore Bend, which is the plainest of stories animated by the most disarming sentimentality. Mr. Hunt has wilfully reversed the usual formula, and evidently his main object is to lift from the small town the curse laid upon it by so many of its former children, now happily exiled. Will Hadley, owner of a weekly—the only weekly of course—in a town of 1300 souls, finds himself at thirty-nine almost past saving from the second-rate unsuccessful pettiness in which he has always lived. He falls in love with a young woman more charming than his own wife, but the usual thing does not occur, and, swallowing his romance, where it sticks in his throat like an orange in an ostrich, he up-stakes, sells out, and moves to New York. Disillusionment, and so back, after two miserable years, to Sycamore Bend, where the people are after all honest, kindly, genuine, where they all call him Will, and where the last page of the book finds him, as he began, pitching horseshoes in the old circle of faces, so second rate, but oh, so friendly. Mr. Hunt has something he is burning to say: that the small town is after all full of all kinds of people, all different, worth knowing, worth telling about. Unfortunately his zeal outruns his pen, and his people, buried under their creator's too manifest good-will, are the kind one would be glad to say "hello" to, but otherwise not particularly alive or interesting. However, here is an old trail, lately deserted, worth walking on for anyone with a knack for discovering characters.

Mr. Boyd also belongs with the realists of the solid, kindly, obscure, hardworking America. His characters, in Samuel Drummond no less than in The Dark Cloud, are often not much more convincing than Mr. Frazier Hunt's, but they are so firmly planted among horses, crops, seasons, corn, wind, war and rain that they acquire some of the inexorable solidity of these surroundings. Time and nature, place and acres, with Mr. Boyd, seem to be a sort of unseen binding material, not in themselves particularly sharp or vivid, but necessary to the men who abide by them, and who without them would lose status and reality. The taste of these two novels is like the taste of bread, wholesome always, excellent in small quantities, but somehow unexciting. Accuracy is not one of the qualities one demands of bread, nor pungency, nor the revelation of truth, and so, because what he writes seems to involve so much of the staff of life, one does not at first ask of Mr. Boyd as much of these virtues as he needs.

The Professor's House is a story within a story. Each half is in a way separate, and thoroughly unlike the other, yet each half sheds light on the other and mysteriously belongs to it. As much a part of the Professor's life and his family's life as if he still existed, the life of a dead man, Tom Outland, overshadows them. Tom Outland came, a greenhorn, as student to the university, bringing with him strange Indian earthenware and an inscrutable past. He did well, he invented something commercially valuable, which was only exploited after his death in France. The invention meant millions to the Professor's daughter, who was engaged to Tom, and married after his death. But the daughters and the sons-in-law and the Professor and all this little family inherit a memory more substantial than money—loyalties and recollections which entangle them. The Professor's life drifts, seems to stop, regains a mellow tired fortitude from thinking of this other life that stopped.

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The Professor has won a prize by his history, builds a new house; he does not need to go on renting the old one that he may work where he always has, but he does so. It is a symbol of his character, on the one side successful in a moderate way, and comfortable, on the other clinging to the charming discomforts and solitudes that were never separate from his work. Like most of Miss Cather's characters, he is drawn in the round, with calm, warm, generous strokes, a figure never in the same place, ever turning slowly a new side to us, changing, growing, even when the growth points a little sadly to a kind of death before death, a premonitory halt before the last stop. The Professor is one of her best, though not the best of all—he is a little more under her watchful eye than was Mrs. Forrester, and is not allowed to grow quite so much by himself. Something about him here and there seems a little too forcibly put together out of attractive pieces: his foreign name, his history, his family, his talk—the little things which should be revelatory, should pull him together into a whole, occasionally pull him apart.

Tom Outland never actually appears in the book. We see him through the eyes of recollection, and in the words of his own story as he told it to the Professor. A strange story, sharing that quality of distinctness from most other stories which belongs to Miss Cather. But Miss Cather runs away with him. She leaves us the most attractive of pictures, but he himself is not as sharp as the outlines of his story. This is chiefly because she tells his story for him. How could Miss Cather avoid this? The story of the discovery of the ancient Indian city is not one she would be likely to trust to any other hands, and the description of the solitary Mesa, entirely her own, one feels to be not only one or the best bits of description she has done, but that any American writer has done. She had to take the words out of Outland's mouth: to have left them there would have blurred the Mesa.

Here, as in all her work, is a fine ringing clarity, a serene breadth and sureness, a slow solid sanity. She is one of the sanest of our writers, in a good sense. She does not strain, or hurry, or attempt anything which cannot clearly be carried out, and one feels constantly the steadiness of her own eye as she looks across the broad land of her work. But does one want her to be always so sane, so conscious? What do these solid things, these believable people, these confident words need? Surely a dash of something, a suspicion of madness, the small seed of irresponsibility, a sense that she may allow her creatures to run away with her a little now and then.

MOSES HARPER.

Contributors

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